

US HEALTH CARE OVERHAUL SIGNUP ENDS, SURVIVES

Page 4



ARMED MILITIAS ROIL PROTESTS IN VENEZUELA

Page 10

Aruba TODAY

On Top Of The News Email:news@arubatoday.com website: www.arubatoday.com Tel:+297 582-7800 Monday, March 31, 2014



Kerry, Lavrov Agree Diplomatic Solution Needed

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, left, shakes hands with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov before the start of their meeting at the Russian Ambassador's Residence to discuss Ukraine, in Paris, Sunday March 30, 2014. Kerry traveled to Paris for a last minute meeting with Lavrov.

(AP Photo/Jacquelyn Martin, Pool)

MATTHEW LEE
AP Diplomatic Writer

PARIS (AP) — U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry says the United States and Russia agree on the need for a diplomatic solution for Ukraine. Kerry also stressed that Ukraine would have to be at the table for negotiations. He made the comments at a news conference Sunday night after

speaking at length with his Russian counterpart.

Kerry said the Russian troop build-up along the border is creating a climate of fear and intimidation in Ukraine and is not helpful.

Russia on Sunday set out demands for a diplomatic resolution to the crisis in Ukraine, saying the former Soviet republic should be unified in a federation al-

lowing wide autonomy to its various regions as U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov met in Paris in another bid to calm tensions.

After a brief call on French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius, Kerry sat down with Lavrov at the residence of the Russian ambassador to France to go over Mos-

cow's response to a U.S. plan to de-escalate the situation as Russian troops continue to mass along the Ukrainian border.

The men said nothing of substance as they shook hands, although after Kerry ended the photo op by thanking assembled journalists, Lavrov cryptically added, in English, "Good luck, and good night."

Appearing on Russian television ahead of his talks with Kerry, Lavrov rejected suspicions that the deployment of tens of thousands of Russian troops near Ukraine is a sign Moscow plans to invade the country following its annexation of the strategic Crimean peninsula.

Continued on page 2

Kerry, Lavrov agree diplomatic solution is needed

Continued from Front

"We have absolutely no intention of, or interest in, crossing Ukraine's borders," Lavrov said. Russia says the troops near the border are there for military exercises and that they have no plans to invade, but U.S. and Europe-

an officials say the numbers and locations of the troops suggest something more than exercises.

And, despite the Russian assurances, U.S., European and Ukrainian officials are deeply concerned about the buildup, which they fear could be a prelude to an invasion or intimidation to compel Kiev to accept

Moscow's demands.

In his interview, Lavrov made clear that Moscow believes a federation is the only way to guarantee Ukraine's stability and neutrality.

"We can't see any other way to ensure the stable development of Ukraine but to sign a federal agreement," Lavrov said, add-

ing that he understood the United States was open to the idea.

U.S. officials have been coy about their position on a federation and insist that any changes to Ukraine's governing structure must be acceptable to the Ukrainians. Ukrainian officials are wary of decentralizing power, fearing that

pro-Russia regions would hamper its western aspirations and potentially split the country apart. However, they are exploring political reforms that could grant more authority to local governments.

The plan that Kerry and Lavrov are discussing covers Ukrainian political and constitutional reforms as well as the disarmament of irregular forces, international monitors to protect minority rights and direct dialogue between Russia and Ukraine, according to U.S. officials, who say it has backing of Ukraine's government.

Kerry and Lavrov have met several times in person and spoken by phone almost daily since the crisis began but have not yet been able to agree on a way forward. The pair met last week in The Hague, where Kerry presented Lavrov with the proposal, which was a response to ideas Lavrov gave him at a March 10 meeting in London.

Sunday's meeting follows an hourlong phone call Friday between U.S. President Barack Obama and Russian President Vladimir Putin in which Obama urged Putin to withdraw his troops from the border with Ukraine. The Russian leader, who initiated the call, asserted that Ukraine's government is allowing extremists to intimidate ethnic Russians and Russian-speaking civilians with impunity — something Ukraine insists is not happening.

That call did little to reassure U.S. officials that Russia is not planning to invade Ukraine after its annexation of Crimea that the west has condemned as illegal and a violation of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. The United States and Europe have imposed sanctions on senior Russian officials in response, sparking reciprocal moves from Moscow.

In the interview with Russian television, Lavrov called the sanctions a "dead-end" strategy that would not achieve results and accused the west of hypocrisy. □



U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, left, and his French counterpart Laurent Fabius arrive for a meeting at the Quai d'Orsay, in Paris, Sunday, March 30, 2014. After a week of travel in the Mideast, Kerry changed course and arrived in Paris Saturday for talks with his Russian counterpart on the Ukraine crisis.

(AP Photo/Thibault Camus)

At Press Time:

No objects from search linked yet to Flight 370

**GILLIAN WONG
ROB GRIFFITH**
Associated Press

PERTH, Australia (AP) — Despite what Australia called an "intensifying search effort," an international hunt Sunday by aircraft and ships in the southern Indian Ocean found no debris linked to the Malaysian jet that vanished more than three weeks ago. Several dozen angry Chinese relatives of Flight 370 passengers demanded "evidence, truth, dignity" from Malaysian authorities, expressing their frustrations at a hotel near Kuala Lumpur as the mystery drags

on.

Nine aircraft and eight ships searching the waters off western Australia found only "fishing equipment and other flotsam" not connected to the Malaysia Airlines plane, the Australian Maritime Safety Authority said. The Boeing 777 disappeared March 8 while flying from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing with 239 people aboard.

But at least four orange objects that were more than 2 meters (6 feet) in size were seen by the crew of an Australian P3 Orion search plane, said the pilot, Flight Lt. Russell Adams, after re-

turning to base.

"I must stress that we can't confirm the origin of these objects," he said, adding that images of the items have yet to be verified, and a GPS buoy was dropped and ships must still investigate. Adams said it was "the most visibility we had of any objects in the water and gave us the most promising leads."

The planes and ships are scouring a search zone that was redefined Friday based on satellite data from the Boeing 777, but they have found no debris associated with the flight, said Australian Navy Com-

modore Peter Leavy. The zone lies in a shipping lane where sea trash is common, complicating the effort.

Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott insisted the "intensifying search effort" was positive because objects "have been recovered from the ocean" in the zone after a weeklong search in another area saw items from planes that ships never managed to find.

The planes taking part in Sunday's search included three Australian P3 Orions, a Japanese P3, a Chinese Il-76, a Korean Orion, a U.S. Poseidon, and two Malaysian C-130s. □

Christie joins '16 contenders at Republican forum

MICHAEL BARBARO

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LAS VEGAS - Gov. Chris Christie, eager to revive his national political fortunes amid a scandal back home in New Jersey, joined some of the other top contenders for the Republican presidential nomination here for a political forum Saturday, complaining that the United States was perceived around the world as weaker since President Barack Obama took office. He bluntly warned that "when America does not play an active and vigorous role in the world, bad people do."

Gov. Scott Walker of Wisconsin suggested that the president's foreign policy team had failed to grasp a lesson known to any parent disciplining a child: You cannot waiver. "If they don't believe we are strong," Walker said of America's foes, "they will take action."

And Jeb Bush, the former Florida governor, bemoaned "American passivity" under Obama, declaring that it was "not a path to security," and calling the reduced U.S. troop levels proposed in the president's new Pentagon budget potentially disastrous.

Amid a crisis in Ukraine, some of the likely candidates for the Republican presidential nomination in 2016 addressed a meeting here of the Republican Jewish Coalition, a collection of elite campaign donors and party activists, offering a unified message of alarm and dismay over the White House's approach to national security and foreign policy.

The event has long lured national Republican candidates eager to burnish their reputations with the interventionist wing of their party. But it now doubles as something else: a de facto audition for the electoral affections of the casino magnate and the Republican donor Sheldon G. Adelson, a member of the Republican Jewish Coalition's board and the owner of the Venetian hotel

where the event was held. For Christie, the event marked part of a carefully choreographed comeback tour, one that began almost immediately after he was exonerated late last week by an internal investigation he commissioned into the lane closing at the George Washington Bridge. Two other investigations, by the New Jersey Legislature and federal

prosecutors, are not yet complete. But even here, Christie could not leave the scandal entirely behind in New Jersey. The moderator of a brief question-and-answer session unexpectedly pressed him on the issue, asking what he had learned about himself from the controversy. Christie said he now recognized how crucial it was to do "a lot more questioning about

things going on, not to just trust" those around him. Party leaders here did not reserve their frustrations for Obama and his fellow Democrats, whom they accused of retreating from the muscular policies of past administrations on Israel, Iran and Russia. Several also issued pointed warnings against what they described as a creeping isolationism within the Repub-

lican Party that threatens to muddy its message and water down its convictions. In a sign of mounting anxiety about the presidential aspirations of Sen. Rand Paul of Kentucky, who has complained that U.S. foreign policy is "too over-reaching," Bush pointedly warned against "isolationism" in his remarks, a line seen as a rebuttal to Paul. So did John R. Bolton, the ambassador to the United Nations under President George W. Bush, who lamented "a rising tide of neo-isolationism within the Republican Party."

Much of the convention was closed to the news media: Bush spoke in an off-the-record session Thursday night in an airplane hangar owned by Adelson. His remarks were described by attendees. On Saturday, Christie and Walker spoke before a crowd that included reporters.

Adelson loomed large over the weekend, setting off murmurs as he entered a ballroom just in time to hear Christie. When Gov. John R. Kasich of Ohio delivered a luncheon speech Saturday to a crowd of several hundred, □



Gov. Chris Christie of New Jersey addresses a meeting of the Republican Jewish Coalition in Las Vegas, March 29, 2014. Speakers at the event criticized the White House as soft on foreign policy but also lambasted what they perceived as a rising neo-isolationist sentiment in their own party, a sign of mounting anxieties over the presidential prospects of Sen. Rand Paul (R-Ky.)

(John Gurzinski/The New York Times)

Memo:

Regulators declined full inquiry into GM ignition flaws

MATTHEW L. WALD

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WASHINGTON - Federal safety regulators decided not to initiate a formal investigation of problems with the ignition switches of Chevrolet Cobalts and other cars even after an investigative group reported that it knew about 29 complaints, four fatal crashes and 14 field reports that showed the problem was preventing air bags from deploying, according to a memo released by House investigators Sunday. A House subcommittee will open hearings Tuesday, looking into why government investigators never realized there was a generic problem with the ignition systems of the Cobalt and other vehicles that could

switch off if the key was bumped, shutting the engine and disabling the air bags.

The findings about the complaints and crashes appeared in a PowerPoint presentation dated Nov. 17, 2007, found among the 6,000 pages of documents submitted by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration in answer to a request by the House Energy and Commerce Committee.

But officials at the safety agency's Office of Defects Investigation, to whom the presentation was given, told committee staff investigators that "the panel did not identify any discernible trend and decided not to pursue a more formal investigation."

The committee also revealed Sunday that Delphi, the supplier that made the ignition switch, told General Motors in February 2002, before the first vehicle to use the switch even hit the road, that the part did not meet General Motors' specifications.

The hearing will be held by the Oversight and Investigations subcommittee.

On Sunday, the chairman of the full committee, Rep. Fred Upton, R-Mich., said in a statement, "The problems persisted over a decade, the red flags were many, and yet those responsible failed to connect the dots." The subcommittee chairman, Rep. Tim Murphy, R-Pa., said in a statement that General Motors and the safety agency had

produced 235,000 documents so far in response to extensive requests from the committee, and that "although we have had the documents for less than a week, they paint an unsettling picture."

Mary T. Barra, the chief executive of GM, and David Friedman, the acting administrator of the agency, are scheduled to testify.

The committee leadership is particularly interested because Upton is an author of a 2000 law, the TREAD Act, that was supposed to improve the government's ability to spot defects that caused deaths. In that case, it was faulty Firestone tires on slightly top-heavy Ford Explorers that made the vehicles prone to roll over. □

Health overhaul signup ends, survives for now

STEVEN R. HURST
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Monday marks the end of the six-month sign-up period for insurance under President Barack Obama's health care overhaul, a highly controversial attempt to reduce the number of Americans without medical coverage, estimated at about 50 million. So far the complicated new system has enticed more than 6 million people to buy insurance from private companies through federal- and state-run market places. The White House says the number is sufficient to keep the new law afloat financially, but may not be enough to avoid big increases in insurance premiums next year. The problem: Fewer than hoped for young Americans — a healthy population — signed up, while older and less healthy people were dominant. Premiums collected from younger people, according to actuarial figures, would have gone to pay for the new law's growing costs



Meghan McMahon and fellow model Alex Terranova hand out stickers and juice on an outdoor pedestrian mall, encouraging the public to get health coverage under the Affordable Care Act, during a promotional campaign launched by Colorado HealthOP, a independent non-profit health care co-op, in Denver. More than 250,000 Coloradans have become covered through the state-run insurance exchange since enrollment began October 1, 2013.

(AP Photo/Brennan Linsley)

to cover older people who joined the insurance pool. The Obama administration hopes that figures for the last weeks of the sign-up period show a surge in young enrollees.

Given the huge problems with the federal government's website at the start of the sign-up period in October, the numbers are expected to be much better in the coming years. Pro-

jections from the Congressional Budget Office show the overhaul is expected to provide coverage to an additional 25 million people by 2016. At that point, 91 percent of American citizens and legal residents would have coverage. Uninsured people who were eligible under the Affordable Care Act, now widely known as Obamacare, who did not sign up by midnight EDT Monday will soon be subject to a fine that will be collected by the Internal Revenue Service, the government agency that collects Americans' income tax. The law provides subsidies to help low- and middle-income Americans afford health insurance policies available through the exchanges. It also prevents insurance companies from denying coverage to people who have health problems that have been dubbed pre-existing conditions. It further prohibits insurers from dropping people from coverage when they develop health troubles that become expensive. The law also ends the practice of putting annual or lifetime caps on how much

insurers will pay to cover medical bills.

The health care overhaul became law four years ago on a strict party-line vote when Democrats still controlled both the House and Senate. The U.S. had been the only major developed country without a national health care system, but many of the law's key provisions did not take effect until this year — including the start-up for policies offered by private companies through exchanges created by the federal and state governments.

The law also expanded Medicaid, the government's health insurance program for the poor, to cover more low-income people, but a 2012 Supreme Court decision that upheld the Affordable Care Act also allowed states to opt out of the Medicaid expansion. Nearly half the states, mostly led by Republicans, are still opposed or undecided about expanding Medicaid. As a result, millions of low-income people who otherwise would have been covered remain uninsured. Still, about 5 to 6 million people have been added to Medicaid rolls in the states that went along with the expansion. And the law also allowed young Americans to remain on their parents' insurance policies up to age 26, providing coverage to an estimated 3 million people.

While Americans are unlikely to go back to a time when people with medical problems could be denied coverage by private insurance companies, Obama's overhaul needs major fixes if it is to go down in history as a legacy achievement like Social Security and Medicare, the long-entrenched and popular programs that provide retirement benefits and health care coverage to seniors.

Republicans have again made repeal of the law their official battle cry ahead of the November elections when control of Congress will be at stake.



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Police fire pepper spray at Arizona college students

TUCSON, Arizona (AP) —

Tucson police shot pepper spray at several hundred fans who took to the streets and threw beer bottles and firecrackers at officers Saturday night after the University of Arizona basketball team's overtime loss to Wisconsin in the NCAA college basketball championship tournament.

Fifteen people were arrested for offenses such as resisting arrest, disorderly conduct and unlawful assembly, Tucson police Sgt. Pete Dugan said. Of those, 14 were released, and one was sent to Pima County jail. He said those who advanced on officers were arrested.

No officers or fans were injured in the unrest that lasted more than an hour.

"The majority of the crowd did not respond to the dispersal order and began throwing beer bottles, beer cans and firecrackers at the officers," Dugan said. "Several of the firecrackers rolled underneath a patrol vehicle that was deployed with the Mobile Field Force Units."

Dugan said crowds leaving bars and restaurants near the campus filled University Boulevard after the game. They wouldn't leave despite urging through a pub-



One man confronts the line of advancing Tucson Police Officers as they try to disperse an unruly crowd of fans after Arizona's 64-63 loss to Wisconsin in overtime of a regional final NCAA college basketball tournament game Saturday, March 29, 2014, in Tucson, Ariz. Fifteen people were arrested for offenses such as resisting arrest, disorderly conduct and unlawful assembly, Tucson police Sgt. Pete Dugan said.

(AP Photo/Arizona Daily Star, Kelly Presnell)

lic address system and social media declaring their gathering an unlawful assembly.

Police brought in cruisers and a unit of officers with batons, helmets and face masks to block the street when people started tossing beer bottles, cans and firecrackers, hitting police vehicles and endangering officers.

Officers fired pepper spray, pepper canisters and pepper balls, which disperse

into the air when they hit, Dugan said. No tear gas was used despite some reports.

The disturbance lasted more than an hour until the streets began to empty around 10 p.m.

A witness, David Kitaeff, told The Associated Press that the incident started innocently with people taking photos, but then "people got in cops' faces." He said fans were throwing drink cans at officers,

whom he saw marching down University Boulevard. Police said no officers were injured and the only damage reported was a street sign that had been knocked over.

Officials said the names of those arrested individuals will be given to the Dean of Students to determine if any of them are currently enrolled at the university.

In a statement, Dean of Students Kendal Washington White called the disturbance "disappointing" and said it was not reflective of the culture of the University of Arizona and Tucson communities.

"Our basketball team had a great season and they exhibited exceptional class at every turn," White said. □

Albuquerque police website under cyberattack

RUSSELL CONTRERAS

Associated Press

ALBUQUERQUE, New Mexico (AP) — The Albuquerque Police Department's website was hit by a cyberattack Sunday, days after threats from a group reported to be the hacker collective Anonymous. Police spokesman Simon Drobik said in a statement that the site was struck just before 11 a.m. local time and remained down hours later.

The origin of the hacking was not immediately clear, Drobik said.

"We can confirm that the website disruption is due to a cyberattack," Drobik said. "The APD online site is not connected to any critical services, and IT personnel continue to work

around the clock."

The incident comes after a YouTube video posted last week said official sites would be hacked in retaliation for a recent police shooting in the Sandia foothills that left a homeless man dead.

The March 16 shooting, which was captured on video and sparked a federal investigation, has garnered protests and calls for reforms within the Albuquerque Police Department.

Albuquerque officials said the city also experienced a "temporary, brief disruption" to the city website late Saturday. City spokeswoman Erin Thompson said in the immediate aftermath that officials hadn't determined the cause of

that problem, but a team was monitoring the city's websites.

Authorities have called Anonymous a loosely organized worldwide hacking group that has stolen confidential information and defaced websites.

Meanwhile, hundreds of demonstrators arrived at Albuquerque Civic Plaza on Sunday holding signs protesting recent police shootings. Victims' advocates called on various city officials to resign.

Since 2010, police have been involved in 37 shootings, 23 of them fatal.

Last week, Albuquerque police shot and killed a man at a public housing complex after authorities said he opened fire on officers. □

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Washington Mudslide: Search dogs take break from recovery

JONATHAN J. COOPER
LISA BAUMANN
Associated Press

DARRINGTON, Washington

(AP) — Families coping with the loss of friends, neighbors and normalcy sought comfort in church services Sunday, as crews worked to recover more victims from the soggy pile of mud that buried the small mountainside community of Oso in Washington state, more than a week ago. Late Saturday, authorities said the number of people believed missing decreased substantially, from 90 to 30. The official death toll of victims identified by the medical examiner increased by one, to 18, said Jason Biermann, program manager at the Snohomish County Department of Emergency Management. Rescue crews said Sunday that many of the dogs that have been essential in the search for victims will take a two-day break. Days of

mann, lead spokeswoman for the team working on the eastern portion of the slide.

Dogs from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, more recent arrivals on the scene, will continue working, said Heidi Amrine, another spokeswoman for the operation. Engineers were watching for any material sloughing off the landslide area, making sure that a weekend of torrential rainfall doesn't displace more land.

Meanwhile, many residents attended church services for solace ahead of another week of recovery efforts. "I can only compare it to a hot hearty meal after a very cold day," Slava Botamanenko of Darrington said of the church services. Botamanenko works at the hospital in Arlington and said he spent two nights there to be sure he was available for work after the slide shut the road.

always discovering complete remains.

This weekend, crews completed a makeshift road that will link one side of the debris field to the other, significantly easing the recovery operation. They've also been working to clear mud and debris from the highway, leaving piles of gooey muck, splintered wood and housing insulation on the sides of the road.

Searchers have had to contend with treacherous conditions.

The search area has septic tanks, gasoline, propane tanks and other hazards. When rescuers and search dogs leave, they're hosed off by hazardous materials crews stationed at the edges of the debris field.

The slide dammed up the North Fork of the Stillaguamish River, causing water to pool up on the east side. The river cut a new channel through the mud, but torrential weekend rainfall



A car sits overturned on a highway in the Carbon Canyon area of Brea, Calif., Friday night, March 28, 2014, after hitting a rock slide caused by an earthquake. The people inside the car sustained minor injuries. A magnitude-5.1 earthquake centered in the area near Los Angeles caused no major damage but jittered nerves throughout the region as dozens of aftershocks struck into the night.

(AP Photo/Kevin Warn)

A 7.5 quake on California fault could be disastrous

LA HABRA, California (AP)

— Experts say a bigger earthquake along the lesser-known fault that gave Southern California a moderate shake could do more damage to the region than the long-dreaded "Big One" from the more famous San Andreas Fault. The Puente Hills thrust fault, which brought Friday night's magnitude-5.1 quake centered in La Habra and well over 100 aftershocks by Sunday, stretches from northern Orange County under downtown Los Angeles into Hollywood — a heavily populated swath of the Los Angeles area. A magnitude-7.5 earthquake along that fault could prove more catastrophic than one along the San Andreas, which runs along the outskirts of metropolitan Southern California, seismologists told the Los Angeles Times. The U.S. Geological Survey estimates that such a quake along the Puente Hills fault could kill 3,000 to 18,000 people and cause up to \$250 billion in damage. In contrast, a larger magnitude 8 quake along the San Andreas would cause an estimated 1,800 deaths.

In 1987, the fault caused the Whittier Narrows earthquake. Still considered

moderate at magnitude 5.9, that quake killed eight people and did more than \$350 million in damage.

Part of the problem with the potential damage is that the fault runs near so many vulnerable older buildings, many made of concrete, in downtown Los Angeles and Hollywood. And because the fault, discovered in 1999, is horizontal, heavy reverberations are likely to be felt over a wide area.

The shaking from a 7.5 quake in the center of urban Los Angeles could be so intense it would lift heavy objects in the air, like the 1989 Loma Prieta Earthquake in Northern California, where the shaking was so bad "we found an upside-down grand piano," USGS seismologist Lucy Jones told the Times. That would "hit all of downtown," Jones said. "And everywhere from La Habra to Hollywood."

About 150 aftershocks, including one of magnitude-4.1, have been felt since Friday night's quake, which forced several dozen people in the Orange County city of Fullerton out of their homes after firefighters discovered foundation problems that made the buildings unsafe to enter, authorities said. □



A search dog stands in a water and looks back at handlers at the scene of a deadly mudslide, in Oso, Wash. Besides the more than two dozen bodies already found, many more people could be buried in the debris pile left from the mudslide one week ago. Ninety people are listed as missing.

(AP Photo/Elaine Thompson)

sniffing through cold, soupy mud and nearly nonstop rain have taken their toll on the animals, and officials say dogs can lose their sensing ability if they work too long.

"The conditions on the slide field are difficult, so this is just a time to take care of the dogs," said Kris Riet-

Authorities have said they have recovered more than two dozen bodies, but they won't be added to the official tally until a formal identification is made. And, underscoring the difficulty of identifying those killed in one of the deadliest landslides in U.S. history, Biermann said crews are not

has raised the water level nearly a foot (30 centimeters), Rietmann said Sunday.

In at least one place, the water level has risen so high that it's covered areas that have already been searched by Snohomish County responders, said Tim Pierce, leader of



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Many still wary of water months after West Virginia spill

SARAH PLUMMER
Associated Press

CHARLESTON, West Virginia (AP) — Ever since chemicals spilled into the drinking water of 300,000 West Virginians in January, Charleston resident Scott McMillion and his family have used their public supply for just one task: flushing their toilet. Distrustful and angry, he's now teaching locals how to trap and purify rainwater as a drinking source. He's among many in this corner of West Virginia who have taken matters into their own hands and changed water consumption habits, possibly for good. Many don't trust official declarations that the water is again safe to drink, nearly three months after the chemical smelling like licorice ran into the Elk River on Jan. 9, throwing lives into disarray.

"When tests from my home come back clear, then I will use the water," said McMillion, founder of Charleston Rain Catchers, a group that teaches people to collect rainfall in containers and filter it. "My family's concern is that there doesn't seem to be hard science to tell us what long-term effects there are to this chemical exposure." He's not alone in his fears. Grassroots groups are providing fearful residents with thousands of gallons of clean drinking water from independent sources, some brought in from other states. Others are surviving on expensive bottled water for cooking or drinking, or taking steps like McMillion to find other alternative sources. Distrust runs deep in West Virginia, a coal-mining state with a legacy of environmental contamination. Paul Sheridan, an attorney who lives in Charleston

with his wife, has changed ways. When eating out, he always checks what water was used in preparing food or beverages.

"It is never far from anyone's mind. You go out to eat and have to ask if they are still cooking with bottled water. If you work in an office where people make coffee, you have to ask," said Sheridan, whose family doesn't drink their tap water.

Sheridan is one of a growing number of people who have filed formal complaints with the Public Service Commission, saying he and his wife don't feel they should pay for water when it was undisputedly contaminated. "If you buy a quart of milk from the store and get it home and discover it is spoiled, the grocery has a responsibility to give you a refund," he said.

Susan Small, a spokesperson for the state regulatory agency, said the commission can't award damages but can review bills and determine if they need to be recalculated. Sheridan's complaint is pending, she said.

Meanwhile, some area residents reconcile themselves to live with nagging worries or fears, though some have moved or are thinking of doing so.

Leah Devine, a Spanish language instructor, still lives in an affected area of downtown Charleston but is closing on a house elsewhere in the state. She said she experienced skin irritation and burning eyelids when she showered around 4:30 p.m. on Jan. 9.

"I don't trust the water, but I'm also moving because of how this situation was handled," she said. "The chemical was pouring into our water since early that

morning and we were not alerted until after 5 p.m. I can't trust that if another, potentially lethal, chemical enters our water or air that we will be notified in time."

On Jan. 9, an industrial storage container spilled

authorities said levels of the chemical MCHM had dropped below a federal safety threshold of 1 part per million. President Jeff McIntyre of the water supplier West Virginia American Water even sipped a glass of the water in front of

which flows in turn into the Ohio River. Both rivers flow through a part of West Virginia many dub "Chemical Valley" because it's home to one of the largest concentrations of U.S. chemical plants.

But since state and federal



Al Jones of the West Virginia department of General Services tests the water as he flushes the faucet and opens a rest room on the first floor of the State Capitol in Charleston, W.Va.

(AP Photo/Steve Helber)

around 10,000 gallons (38,000 liters) of crude MCHM, a chemical used in coal production, a half mile (800 meters) above a drinking water intake in the river. The drinking ban was lifted Jan. 13, when

journalists soon after. But public wariness didn't evaporate in a state steeped in coal-processing and other industries.

The Elk River is a nearly 180-mile (290-kilometer) tributary of the Kanawha River,

funds for water distribution stopped last month, many grassroots organizations have arisen to help distribute clean water, alleviating the expense for many residents still distrustful of their tap water. □

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Focus Forward: The Artificial Leaf Is Here. Again

JACK HITT

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General Electric is promoting a feel-good collection of videos these days.

Called "Focus Forward," it promises "short films, big ideas." Each of these mini-docs triumphantly chron-

icles an innovative idea, like Daniel Nocera's. This Harvard chemist has pioneered the artificial leaf, an invention that generates energy more or less the way a tree does. Light strikes a container of water and out bubbles hydrogen,

an energy source.

The three-minute film about his idea blazes with shafts of light spangling off leaves, and its soundtrack clocks more crescendos per minute than a high-school cello recital. There are many low-angle shots of a tower-

frustration. A scientist announces a breakthrough in, say, battery technology or algae biofuel, and the talk ramps up quickly to full-throttle utopian, tapping into a frontier dream that's so alluring to Americans: energy from light, self-sustaining, untethered from the grid.

But there always seems to be an obstacle between the big idea and self-sufficiency. Sometimes, it's the idea itself - a technological bug that seems fixable turns out to be weird and inscrutable. (Consider the jet pack with its cascade of problems: fuel, weight, the preposterously unaerodynamic design of the human body.) But in this case, the technology is sound, say researchers including David Tiede of the Argonne National Laboratory in Chicago.

Nocera's idea is based on photosynthesis. When light bombards your average leaf, it splits water in the leaf into oxygen, which we breathe, and then binds the hydrogen with carbon dioxide to ultimately make carbohydrates, its food - which, depending on what new diet book is trending, is sometimes food for us, too. Nocera's leaf mimics this process. A vessel of water is exposed to light. A silicon strip coated in catalysts breaks down the water molecule such that on one side oxygen bubbles up, and, on the other, hydrogen, which can be used as a fuel.

"You can drop it in a glass of water and hold it up to a window," he said. "You won't need heavy engineering."

The leaf and its technology have been replicated many times, at the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, the University of Wisconsin and Free University Berlin, so technological obstacles in creating cheap, reliable, nonpolluting energy aren't the problem. In fact, the issue isn't the invention at all - it's how to use it.

"If I give you a canister of hydrogen that we got from the artificial leaf, you can't

use it right away," Nocera said. To do so, you need a fuel cell, which can turn hydrogen into electricity.

There are efforts to begin incorporating such energy technology into daily life. A number of auto companies have developed hydrogen-powered cars, such as the Honda FCX Clarity and the Mercedes F-Cell. But this is merely the beginning of a much larger change that's needed.

Discovering a brilliant way to efficiently generate hydrogen is hard enough. Then there's everything that comes after, such as getting consumers accustomed to what's needed for it to work, such as fuel cells - which convert hydrogen into usable electricity.

"Whenever you make something that's two steps removed from an infrastructure, that's the big problem you have going to market: You have to change an entire infrastructure," Nocera said. "If we had fuel cells in your house and your car, then everybody would be trying to implement the artificial leaf right now."

The other obstacle is the marketplace. Only a few years ago, he said, "the magic number was \$3 'gas gallon equivalent.'" In other words, could he produce the energy equivalent of a gallon of gasoline and keep costs around \$3? Even as he closed in on that number, the old fossil-fuel industry pulled the rug out from under him with a surge in cheap natural-gas extraction, driven by hydraulic fracturing or fracking. Seemingly overnight, the magic number became "a buck fifty," he said.


But therein lies a glimmer of hope. Hydrogen can be produced by fracking, although it comes at a cost of carbon pollution. Still, widespread fracking might lead to widespread hydrogen use. In fact, the U.S. Senate revived a Fuel Cell and Hydrogen Caucus in 2012.

"Fracking could drive the establishment of an infrastructure for using hydrogen at the home," Nocera said. □




Daniel Nocera, a professor at Harvard University, holds an artificial leaf he developed, at his laboratory in Cambridge, Mass., March 25, 2014. Nocera's invention mimicks the process of photosynthesis in plants, generating energy more or less the way a tree does, but it will require widespread use of fuel cells if it is to become an energy source for the mass market.

(Mylan Cannon/The New York Times)



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ing Nocera telling us that his device will one day be in people's homes, pumping out energy.

"Close your eyes," the colossus says, and "think about your house being its own power station."

Here's the thing: Such artificial-leaf optimism could also be found a year ago in a Los Angeles Times article that held the artificial leaf "could create enough clean fuel to power a home for a day in developing countries." And the year before that, in The New Yorker, where Nocera said the artificial leaf would "turn a home into 'a self-sufficient power station.'" Or go back one more year, to the pages of The New York Times, where Nocera said, "Our goal is to make each home its own power station."

So, all right already. Where's my power station? Prowl the edges of contemporary invention, and you experience a lot of this

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Mediators pushing to rescue Mideast peace talks

JOSEF FEDERMAN
Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — American mediators held urgent contacts with Israeli and Palestinian officials Sunday in hopes of salvaging troubled Mideast peace talks — searching for a formula to bring the sides back together and extend the negotiations beyond a current late-April deadline. Officials from all sides said diplomacy has picked up over the past 24 hours, and an Israeli official, speaking on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to brief journalists, said talks with the Palestinians via the Americans were going on throughout the day. With the sides unable to agree on the terms of a promised Israeli prisoner release, the negotiations appear to face a risk of collapse in the coming weeks. U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, in Paris, was weighing a return to the region to find a way out of the deadlock. The issue of the prisoner release “could be resolved or it could fall apart” in the next few days, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told a closed meeting of officials from his Likud Party, according to meeting participants. “In any case, there won’t be any deal without getting something in return.” The participants spoke on condition of anonymity because the meeting was closed to the media. Under heavy pressure from

Kerry, Israel and the Palestinians agreed last July to hold nine months of peace talks, setting a late-April deadline for a final agreement. When that became unrealistic, Kerry scaled back his goals and said he would aim for a preliminary “framework” agreement by April, with the goal of continuing negotiations through the end of the year to iron out the final details of a deal. But even that more modest goal has run into trouble due to a snag over the prisoner release. When the talks began last summer, Israel promised to free 104 long-serving Palestinian prisoners in four stages, with the final release coming by the end of March. After carrying out the first three releases, Israel has balked at releasing the final group without a Palestinian commitment to extend talks. Israel’s defense minister said Sunday it that “this is a critical week for the Israeli-Palestinian issue.” Moshe Yaalon was speaking after meeting visiting U.S. military chief Gen. Martin Dempsey. Yaalon said Israel appreciates the U.S.’s “commitment and contribution” in facilitating talks. Israeli officials say they are under no obligation to carry out the final release because of what they say is a Palestinian failure to negotiate in good faith. Yuval Steinitz, a Likud Cabinet minister, said “it is clear” the release can’t be car-

ried out if Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas plans on walking out of the talks the next day. “This release was meant to be carried out as the talks proceed, and not when

ing every possible effort” to ensure the release of the fourth group. Palestinian officials said they would drive a tough bargain in exchange for extending the talks. The

dom fighters. Israel considers them to be terrorists. The prisoners released in the previous three tranches had all served lengthy terms for involvement in bloody attacks on Israelis,



A Palestinian protester holds a placard with a drawing depicting Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu during an anti-peace talks rally in the West Bank city of Ramallah. American mediators held urgent contacts with Israeli and Palestinian officials Sunday in hopes of salvaging troubled Mideast peace talks.

(AP Photo/Nasser Nasser)

they fall apart.” Mohammed Ishtayeh, an aide to Abbas, accused Israel of “trying to blackmail us.” But Palestinian officials stopped short of threatening to walk out of the talks altogether. The chief Palestinian negotiator, Saeb Erekat, confirmed that negotiations were ongoing and said Abbas was “mak-

officials said Abbas would seek the release of 1,000 additional prisoners held by Israel as well as a freeze in Israeli settlement construction in captured territories sought by the Palestinians. The issue of Palestinian prisoners is deeply emotional on both sides. The Palestinians consider the roughly 5,000 Palestinians held by Israel to be heroes and free-

and scenes of them returning to jubilant celebrations have angered the Israeli public. Netanyahu said he would present any additional release to his Cabinet — where approval is not guaranteed. Netanyahu’s coalition is dominated by hard-liners who have been extremely critical of the previous releases. □

Turkey premier may get boost from local elections

DESMOND BUTLER

Associated Press

ISTANBUL (AP) — Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan appeared to get a big boost from local elections Sunday, in a vote that he has framed as a referendum on his rule.

Erdogan wasn't on the ballots in the countrywide polls, but with about half of votes counted, Turkish newswires suggested that his party was significantly outstripping its results in the last local elections of 2009 and roundly beating the main opposition party.

The strong results would appear to strengthen the prime minister following a tumultuous corruption scandal.

In high-profile races for mayor of Istanbul and Ankara, incumbents from Erdogan's Justice or Development Party, better known by its Turkish acronym AKP, were in tight races, according to the early results. The Turkish elections board says more than 50 million people were eligible to vote.

Voter turnout appeared

to be strong, with people forming long queues at polling stations. Although quality polling is hard to come by in Turkey, it was widely expected that the AKP will outstrip opposition parties Sunday, winning a plurality of the vote.

But how much of a plurality will matter. Erdogan's party has already been trying to lower expectations. His party has pointed to the 39 percent they received in the 2009 local elections as a benchmark.

Erdogan and his party have dominated Turkish politics over the past decade in a period of great prosperity. The party came to power backed by a pious Muslim base looking for greater standing in a country that had favored a secular elite. But AKP, whose party symbol is a light bulb, has also cultivated an identity of pragmatism and competency.

That image has been rocked by a corruption scandal, with a series of leaked tapes bringing down four ministers with revelations of bribe-taking



Turkey's Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan casts his ballot at a polling station in Istanbul, Turkey, Sunday, March 30, 2014. Erdogan has a central role in Turkey's local elections Sunday even though his name won't be on the ballots. The elections are widely seen as a referendum on Erdogan's tumultuous rule of more than a decade, and the prime minister has been campaigning as if his own career were on the line.

(AP Photo/Emrah Gurel)

and cover-up. One tape allegedly involves Erdogan and family members, but he and his allies have rejected the allegations as

a plot orchestrated by followers of U.S.-based Muslim cleric Fethullah Gulen, a former Erdogan ally who has split with him.

Erdogan has been suggesting at rallies of hundreds of thousands of supporters

that the election will let the people decide if the tapes are significant.

"What the people say goes," Erdogan said after casting his ballot. The people's decision is (to be) respected." □

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Japan, North Korea hold 1st senior talks in 16 months

BEIJING (AP) — Japan and North Korea started high-level government talks on Sunday for the first time in more than a year that were expected to focus on abductions of Japanese by North Korea decades ago.

The fate of at least a dozen people who Japan says were abducted by North Korea in the 1970s and 1980s is likely to top the agenda of the two-day talks in Beijing.

Japan and North Korea do not have diplomatic relations. They held talks in 2012 during a brief warming of relations, but those ended after North Korea launched a rocket in December of that year.


The two countries agreed to resume the talks after an informal gathering earlier

this month between Japanese and North Korean foreign ministry officials in the northeastern Chinese city of Shenyang.

On Sunday, North Korea's ambassador, Song Il Ho, met at the country's embassy in Beijing with the Japanese delegation led by Junichi Ihara, director general for Asian and Oceanic Affairs at the Japanese Foreign Ministry.

North Korea admitted in 2002 that its agents kidnapped more than a dozen Japanese in the 1970s and 1980s. It allowed five of them to return to Japan, but said the others were either dead or had not been abducted to begin with. Japan believes there could be other Japanese abductees still alive in the North. □





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PRESENT

Attacks threaten to undermine Afghanistan election

**AMIR SHAH
RAHIM FAIEZ
Associated Press**

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) — Taliban militants attacked the main Afghan election commission's headquar-

walled off and guarded by a series of watchtowers and checkpoints — but two warehouses were set on fire as the attackers barged the complex with rocket-propelled grenades

and heavy machine-gun fire. The United Nations mission in Afghanistan confirmed that a neighboring base it uses was hit by small-arms fire too. It said all U.N. staff members were

accounted for and safe. Afghan police killed all five militants after a four-hour standoff, deputy Interior Minister Mohammad Ayub Salangi said. Two policemen were wounded in the firefight after security forces surrounded the building. None of the dozens of employees and other people who had been hiding inside the election commission headquarters was injured, Salangi said.

It was the second attack on electoral offices this week. Gunmen Tuesday killed four people in an assault on another IEC office in Kabul on Tuesday. A foreign guest house came under attack Friday. The Taliban claimed responsibility for all three assaults. The United Nations expressed confidence that the Taliban would fail to disrupt next week's elections, and several Afghans insisted they would cast their ballots despite a Tal-

iban warning to stay home. "The U.N. remains undeterred in carrying out its work and I am confident that the IEC is as equally determined," the acting U.N. chief in Afghanistan, Nicholas Haysom, said in a statement. "More importantly, I am sure that ordinary Afghans remain undeterred in their desire to have their say on the future direction of their country." Mohammad Fared, a 23-year-old Kabul resident, was just as defiant.

"No one can stop us from casting our vote on election day. We will participate in the election," he said.

While the recent attacks have resulted in relatively few casualties, they have had a big psychological impact and raised concerns about the Afghan security forces' abilities as most international forces withdraw by the end of this year. □



Afghanistan presidential candidate and former foreign minister Abdullah Abdullah, center, reaches out to supporters during an election campaign rally in Kandahar, southern Afghanistan, Sunday, March 30, 2014. The race for Afghanistan's next president narrows to eight with the latest withdrawal of Mohammad Nadir Naim, a minor presidential candidate with royal lineage. (AP Photo/Allauddin Khan)

ters in Kabul on Saturday, the latest in a series of audacious assaults threatening to scare voters away just a week before Afghans go to the polls.

It was the third attack in Kabul in five days claimed by the Taliban. The Islamic militant movement has promised a campaign of violence to disrupt the April 5 elections to choose the country's next president and provincial council members.

The five attackers disguised themselves as women, wearing the all-encompassing burqa to sneak unnoticed into a building that overlooked the heavily fortified Independent Election Commission's headquarters on the eastern edge of the capital, officials said. They never breached the compound — which is

2 Spanish journalists kidnapped in Syria go free

**HAROLD HECKLE
RYAN LUCAS
Associated Press**

MADRID (AP) — Two Spanish journalists freed after being held hostage for more than six months in Syria by a rogue al-Qaida group returned home Sunday to an emotional welcome from friends and colleagues. Veteran reporter Javier Espinosa, Middle East bureau chief of El Mundo newspaper, and Ricardo Garcia Vilanova, a freelance photographer, arrived in Madrid aboard a Spanish government executive jet, less than 24 hours after calling from Turkey to say they were out of captivity and safe.

As Espinosa walked down the steps from the plane, his young son raced across

the tarmac and threw his arms around his father in a bear hug. Other family members, newspaper representatives and government officials also were on hand to greet them, according to video of their arrival posted to El Mundo's website. Before gaining their freedom, Espinosa and Garcia Vilanova were on a long list of journalists who have been kidnapped while covering the conflict in Syria, which according to press advocacy groups has become the most dangerous country in the world for reporters.

Media rights groups say nearly 30 reporters have been killed there since the conflict began in March 2011. With the two Spanish journalists now free, there

are at least nine more foreign correspondents still missing in Syria as well as 10 Syrian reporters.

Jihadi groups, such as the al-Qaida-breakaway Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, are believed responsible for most kidnappings over the past year, but government-backed militias, criminal gangs and more moderate rebel factions also have been involved with motives ranging from ransom to prisoner exchanges. Most have taken place in rebel-held territories, particularly in chaotic northern and eastern Syria, where extremist groups hold influence.

It was militants from the Islamic State that abducted Espinosa and Garcia Vilanova at a checkpoint

in the town of Tal Abyad in the eastern province of Raqqqa on Sept. 16. The two men, who have frequently traveled to Syria to cover the fight between President Bashar Assad and the rebels seeking to oust him, were on their way out of the country after a two-week reporting trip when they were seized.

At a hastily-convened news conference Sunday at El Mundo newspaper's Madrid headquarters, Espinosa and Garcia Vilanova received a standing ovation. They thanked those present for their support, but said they could not provide details of their captivity or how they won their freedom, saying the matter was "out of our hands." □

Armed pro-government militias roil Venezuela protests

FABIOLA SANCHEZ

FRANK BAJAK

Associated Press

VALENCIA, Venezuela (AP)

— The masked gunmen emerged from a group of several dozen motorcycle-mounted government loyalists who were attempting to dismantle a barricade in La Isabelica, a working-class district of Valencia that has been a center of unrest since nationwide protests broke out last month.

The barricades' defenders had been hurling rocks, sticks and other objects at the attackers, who included perhaps a dozen armed men, witnesses told The Associated Press.

Lisandro Barazarte, a photographer with the local newspaper, *Notitarde*, caught images of several of the men shooting into the crowd while steadying their firearms on their palms.

"They were practiced shooters," Barazarte said. "More were armed, but didn't fire."

When it was over, two La Isabelica men were dead: a 22-year-old student, Jesus Enrique Acosta, and a little league baseball coach, Guillermo Sanchez. Wit-

nesses told the AP the first was shot in the head, the second in the back. They said neither was at the barricades when he was killed. Similar shootings across

gan in mid-February. President Nicolas Maduro has done nothing to publicly discourage the violence by armed pro-government militants, loosely

academy at the Central University of Venezuela in the capital in which some 40 masked men and women identifying themselves as government defenders

motorcyclists, to separate events at the presidential palace — a Feb. 24 rally and a "peace conference" on March 13.

At the latter gathering, Vice President Jorge Arreaza told his guests, "If there has been exemplary behavior it has been the behavior of the motorcycle colectivos that are with the Bolivarian revolution." He claimed the CIA was behind a propaganda campaign to discredit the colectivos.

Maduro has blamed the violence on the other side, telling supporters on March 9, "There are violent armed groups in the streets, and they are all from the right." Colectivos have long been a fixture in poorer neighborhoods that became strongholds of the late President Hugo Chavez during his 14-year reign.

They organize cultural events and community services such as youth summer camps but have also included armed motorcycle-riding militants who have long menaced opposition activists, blocking their marches and roughing up peaceful protesters. Those violent tactics escalated when anti-government protests surged in mid-February. Fatalities since blamed on colectivo aggression have mostly involved university students, including a prominent student leader, Daniel Tinoco, shot in the chest March 10 in the western city of San Cristobal, where the unrest began amid student outrage at alleged police indifference to an attempted sexual assault.

Most were manning barricades, as were the two students in the western city of Barquisimeto wounded the following day by gunmen who pierced their university's perimeter and set fire to several cars inside.

During the attack in La Isabelica in Valencia, Acosta was hit by a bullet while he was inside an apartment with a friend near the barricades. Sanchez, 42, was out walking to buy a paint brush when the bullet that claimed his life tore into his lower torso. □



Carabobo's State police officers stand next to graffiti that reads in Spanish "Isabelica in war" during a opposition protest at Isabelica neighborhood outside Valencia, Venezuela. The people of the poor district of La Isabelica were made to pay for taking to the streets in anti-government protests. More than a dozen masked men on motorcycles roared through, shooting up a barricade and killing a university student and a 42-year-old man painting his house.

(AP Photo/Fernando Llano)

Venezuela by gunmen allied with the socialist-led government have claimed at least seven lives and left more than 30 people wounded since the anti-government protests be-

known as "colectivos," which are also blamed for scores more cases of beatings and intimidation in multiple cities. That includes a March 19 incursion into the architecture

bloodied at least a dozen students.

In fact, since the protests began, Maduro and his vice president have each welcomed pro-government "motorizados," or

Cuba:

Lawmakers OK key foreign investment law

ANNE-MARIE GARCIA

Associated Press

HAVANA (AP)

— Cuban lawmakers on Saturday approved a law aimed at making Cuba more attractive to foreign investors, a measure seen as vital for the island's struggling economy.

Meeting in an extraordinary session, parliament replaced a 1995 foreign investment law that has lured less overseas capital than the island's Communist leaders had hoped.

Cuba's GDP expanded 2.7 percent last year, below targets and weak for a developing nation. Government officials say the economy needs 5 to 7 percent annual growth to develop properly.

"Cuba needs from \$2 billion to \$2.5 billion a year in

direct foreign investment to advance its socialist socio-economic model, prosperous and sustainable," said Marino Murillo, a vice president and the czar of President Raul Castro's economic reforms.

"Not using those sources would retard national development," Murillo told lawmakers in comments broadcast on state television, where news of the approval was announced. Murillo said Cuba will especially look for agricultural investment.

Foreign media were not given access to the closed-door meeting.

Some details of the legislation emerged in official media in recent days. Among other things, it would cut taxes on profits by about half, to 15 percent, and

make companies exempt from paying taxes for the first eight years of operation. An exception would affect companies that exploit natural resources, such as nickel or fossil fuels. They could pay taxes as high as 50 percent.

Meanwhile, many foreigners doing business with the island would be exempt from paying personal income tax.

Cuban-born economist and University of Pittsburgh professor emeritus Carmelo Mesa-Lago said elements such as lower taxes, a shorter timeline for approvals and the ability to invest in property send encouraging signals, but it's too early to tell.

"The test of the law is how it will be implemented in practice," Mesa-Lago said.

Investment projects wholly funded by foreign capital would be explicitly allowed in all sectors except health care and education, something that is essentially unheard of today. But Murillo's remarks suggested the government intends to continue in at least a watchdog role "so that there is no concentration of property."

"What the new law establishes is that the state must always be there," he said. It's also not clear that wholly foreign-owned ventures would enjoy the same tax benefits.

Washington's 52-year-old economic embargo on Cuba prevents most U.S. trade with the island and includes sanctions to discourage foreign outfits from doing business with Havana. □



In Soho, New York City:

Successful Art Expo For Elisa Lejuez in S Artspace Gallery



NEW YORK/ORANJESTAD - The solo art exhibition of Aruban artist Elisa Lejuez officially opened at the S Artspace Gallery in Soho, New York City recently. The collection, titled 'We Kiss The Joy As It Flies,' was strongly inspired by Zen teachings and the basic principles of Buddhism. This is the second solo art exhibition of Elisa Lejuez in the United States and a successful one, considering the turn-out on the opening night and the number of artworks already sold.

The well-attended opening attracted New York residents and fellow artists, representatives of US-based media as well as the Aruba Tourism Authority. Lejuez's latest collection 'We kiss the joy as it flies' expresses thoughts of finding balance in life, brought to us by the artist in bright

and vibrant colors, making use of mixed media techniques. An interview with Dutch

Caribbean artist Elisa Lejuez during the opening reception and an impression of her 'We Kiss



the joy as it flies collection was recorded by tv news station One Caribbean Television, that aired on RCN cable in Boston, New York City, DC Metro Area, Chicago and Philadelphia as well as on 13 Caribbean islands, including Aruba. The interview can be viewed online here, or at www.onecaribbean-television.com.

Elisa Lejuez's art collection will be on display until April 2nd at the S Artspace Gallery on 345 Broome Street in Soho and at the Affordable Art Fair in New York City from April 3-6, 2014 at the Metropolitan Pavilion in Chelsea.

More information is available on www.sohotelartspace.com and www.elisalejuez.com. □

L.G. Smith's Chop & Steakhouse proudly introduces Chef Kelvyn Garcia!

ORANJESTAD -- Chef Garcia just recently joined the culinary brigade at the Renaissance Resorts in Oranjestad, where he will be in charge of its flagship restaurant, an American Steakhouse, and the USDA-inspected Certified Angus Beef headquarters on the island, the L.G. Smith's Chop & Steakhouse. Originally from Venezuela with a strong French and later Spanish cooking orientation the chef is on a mission to introduce bolder and bigger flavors to the favorite downtown steakhouse - think onions, garlic, wine, fresh herbs and butter - such as in the Big Oscar Prime Top Sirloin, Certified Angus Beef, topped with scampi King crab, tiger shrimp, poached lobster and lobster Hollandaise; or the Steakhouse Chop Salad with more than 10 delectable ingredients including applewood smoked bacon and aged cheddar. The chef graduated with honors from the Culinary Arts School in Venezuela where he was lauded for design, complexity and

presentation, also furthering his training as a Sommelier, at the same school. The funny thing is, he says, he arrived in the kitchen after finishing university with a degree in Public Accounting. Having explored some rather dull career opportunities he decided to switch gears, and convert his hobby into a full time career. "I was blessed," he explains, "having worked with some great chefs at Amuse Bistro in Aruba under the guidance of an accomplished proprietor/chef, and prior to that, at the Hotel Tamnaco Intercontinental, in Venezuela, where I held a number of top positions, mentored by Venezuela's most famous chefs." Between promotions, Garcia travelled to Europe and further honed his skills at the 2 Michelin stars Mugaritz restaurant, at the 3 Michelin star El Celler de Can Roca restaurant, and at the 3 Michelin star Akelare restaurant, all three renowned establishments in Spain. Having perfected his trade overseas, he settled in Aru-

ba, enjoying the quality of life and the serenity which comes with island living. Garcia is proud to report that on a sellout Valentine's day, L.G. Smith's Steak & Chophouse served giant porterhouse steaks for two, slow cooked for 24 hours, and on the occasion of the restaurant's 10th anniversary, he introduced an irresistible dinner special packing diners in with the promise of great food, delivering complete customer satisfaction. On the anniversary menu, a chef's selection of five appetizers, nine main courses including such standouts as Certified Angus Beef Prime Top Sirloin Baseball, a flavorful, juicy and tender cut, Surf & Turf, and a Vegetarian Wellington, besides eight interesting sides, and four dessert choices, for the incredible price of \$40.-, 2nd person pays just \$10. The too-good-to-be-true deal, is true, and you are invited to try it in the stylish and contemporary dining room located next to Crystal Casino, before mid-



night, April 10th, 2014. Valentine's Day and the restaurant's anniversary marked the first two of many events planned including the revival of the popular brunch, planned to debut in April, one Sunday each month. Down the road a complete new menu re-launch is planned as well as the introduction of slow-cooking. In between, the chef orchestrated a giant cook

out at Wema Goes Memphis, a local BBQ and cook-out competition with great prizes, surprising all festival goers with an amazing rib recipe. Kelvyn jokingly recounts he made cooking his life-long career because his busy single working mom never properly fed him, for lack of time. He had to fend for himself in the kitchen, which he did, and still does, very successfully if we may add. □

**Beauty
On The
Beach**

**Laurra
Vidcomi**

She is from New Jersey, USA. It is her first time in Aruba. She is staying at the Radisson Beach Resort. What she loves most of Aruba is the weather and the beach.

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PALM BEACH - Fresher than Fresh, is what you are served in the popular Bugaloe Beach Bar & Grill, located at De Palm Pier, between the RIU Palace Hotel and The Raddison Hotel. Mondays will no longer be just another Monday. No! It's Crazy Fish Monday at Bugaloe! Beautiful colorful platter of exquisite fish, yellow rice and rich vegetables is what you will be served from Chef Hernandez' kitchen every Monday. Whether choosing Fried Fish Basket for only \$15 or a delicious Red Snapper for \$20, you wish it was Monday every day! Bugaloe is known for fun and craziness, so it was only logical Chef Marc Hernandez likes to go wild when it comes to his cooking. Caught in the

morning, served at night is the true Bugaloe way, maybe this explains its popularity from the start. Crazy Fish Monday is served from 5.30 p.m. till 10 p.m. Bugaloe Beach Bar & Grill is open daily from 9 a.m. till midnight. Start your day of right with a delicious cappuccino, or walk in to enjoy a casual lunch in between sunbathing. A few nights a week Bugaloe is host to some of the best live bands of Aruba, while you are savoring dinner and enjoying the beautiful Aruba Sunset! Don't forget to make one hour in the day even happier at Bugaloe's daily Happy Hour from 5 till 6 p.m. Reservations are not necessary, just follow your hips to the music and the fun and smiles saluting you! ☐



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Djokovic claims 4th Miami crown

Novak Djokovic of Serbia, celebrates after defeating Rafael Nadal of Spain, 6-3, 6-3 during the men's final match at the Sony Open Tennis tournament on Sunday, March 30, 2014, in Key Biscayne, Fla. Associated Press

Page 22

Pierce, Nets win 13th straight at home, top Wolves

NEW YORK (AP) — Paul Pierce scored 22 points as the Brooklyn Nets moved to the brink of a playoff spot by beating the Minnesota Timberwolves 114-99 on Sunday for their club record-equaling 13th straight home victory. Pierce scored 16 in the first quarter, two nights after putting up 17 in the first period. Joe Johnson added 19 points for the Nets, who would clinch a playoff spot if the New York Knicks lost to Golden State later Sunday. Brooklyn equaled the longest home winning

streak in the NBA this season and the best in the history of the franchise. Corey Brewer and Kevin Martin each scored 21 for the Timberwolves, who had won two in row and were coming off the highest-scoring game in the NBA this season, when they scored a franchise-record 143 points in a rout of the Lakers on Friday.

CAVALIERS 90, PACERS 76

CLEVELAND (AP) — Dion Waiters scored 19 points and Luol Deng added 15 as the Cleveland Cavaliers kept their playoff



Brooklyn Nets' Paul Pierce, right, protects the ball from Minnesota Timberwolves' Corey Brewer during the fourth quarter of an NBA basketball game, Sunday, March 30, 2014, at Barclay's Center in New York. The Nets won 114-99.

Associated Press

push going with a 90-76 win over the Indiana Pacers, who are losing their grip on the No. 1 seed in the Eastern Conference. Tristan Thompson had 16 rebounds as the Cavs snapped a nine-game losing streak against Indiana. Cleveland came in three games behind slumping, idle Atlanta for the conference's final playoff spot. With seven games left — six against teams with losing records — the Cavs still have a chance.

Continued on Page 19

NBA Capsules

Continued from Page 18

The Pacers, meanwhile, are falling apart. They lost their fifth straight road game and now lead Miami by one game for the East's top record and home-court advantage.

Paul George scored 15 and David West 14 for Indiana, which fell behind by 21 in the fourth quarter.

THUNDER 116, JAZZ 96

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP) — Kevin Durant had 31 points and nine assists to help the Oklahoma City Thunder defeat the Utah Jazz.

Durant scored at least 25 points for the 38th consecutive game, the longest streak since Michael Jordan did it in 40 straight games for the Chicago Bulls during the 1986-87 season.

Russell Westbrook scored 19 points, Serge Ibaka had 17 points and Caron Butler added 15 for the Thunder, who have won six of seven. Oklahoma City shot 55



The ball goes out of bounds as Chicago Bulls' Carlos Boozer (5) and Boston Celtics' Jared Sullinger (7) battle for a rebound in the first quarter of an NBA basketball game in Boston, Sunday, March 30, 2014.

Associated Press

percent from the field and made 11 of 18 3-pointers and 23 of 26 free throws. Enes Kanter had 18 points

and 12 rebounds for the Jazz, who have lost four in a row.

RAPTORS 98, MAGIC 93

ORLANDO, Florida (AP) — DeMar DeRozan had 28 points and Jonas Valanciunas added 20 points and

nine rebounds as the Toronto Raptors escaped with a victory over the Orlando Magic. □



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CASINO AND SHOPS

Steven Bowditch wins Texas Open, place at Masters

TIM PRICE

Associated Press

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — Steven Bowditch held on to win the Texas Open in windy conditions Sunday for his first PGA Tour victory and a spot in the Masters. The 30-year-old Australian golfer bogeyed the par-5 18th for a 4-over 76 and a one-stroke victory. "I'm over the moon. I really can't believe it," Bowditch said. It was the highest closing score by a winner since Vijay Singh finished with a 4-over 76 in the 2004 PGA Championship, and the highest in a non-major

since Fred Couples had a 5-over 77 in the 1983 Kemper Open. Bowditch finished at 8-under 280 at TPC San Antonio and earned \$1,116,000. "Every time I got out of check, looking ahead to the Masters and winning golf events and making my speeches before I was finished, I had to pull myself in check every time," said Bowditch, wearing a green shirt. "And it happened a lot today." Bowditch, based in Dallas, entered the week 339th in the world rankings and had only two top-10 finishes in eight years on the

tour. He won once on the Australasian circuit and twice on the Web.Com Tour. "He's been a battler. He's gone through a lot in his life," said John Senden, a fellow Australian who won the Valspar Championship two weeks ago. Senden waited about an hour after his round to shake Bowditch's hand. "That last putt wasn't his best, but to finish it off he was as cool as a cucumber really," Senden said. "I'm proud to be his mate." Will MacKenzie and Daniel Summerhays were



Steven Bowditch, of Australia, poses with his trophy after winning the Texas Open golf tournament, Sunday, March 30, 2014, in San Antonio.

Associated Press

equal in second place. MacKenzie shot 70, and Summerhays had a 71. Chesson Hadley and Ryan Palmer missed chances to get into the Masters through the top 50 in the world ranking. Hadley, the Puerto Rico Open winner, needed at least a sixth-place finish, but closed with an 80 to finishing equal 56th at 5 over. Palmer needed a top-three finish and had an 82 to also finish 56th. Bowditch played the front nine in 3-over 39, making a double bogey on the par-4 fourth. He countered a bogey on the par-3 13th with a birdie on

the par-5 14th and made three pars before missing a 3-foot par putt and settling for a bogey on 18. On the par-3 16th, he got up-and-down after missing the green. He pushed his drive on the par-4 17th, hit his approach on the green and two-putted, then pulled his tee shot left on 18, recovered with a shot to the fairway and reached the green in three. "I just drew back on some experience," Bowditch said. Matt Kuchar and Andrew Loupe shot 75s and shared fourth place at 6-under. □

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Kurt Busch bests Johnson to win at Martinsville

HANK KURZ Jr.,
AP Sports Writer
MARTINSVILLE, Virginia
(AP)—Kurt Busch's Sunday at Martinsville Speedway, in some ways, was like his career wrapped into one afternoon.

It started with a pit road confrontation with Brad Keselowski, one that had Busch threatening over his radio to rearrange Keselowski's face when the race was finished, and ended with Busch ending an 83-race victory drought.

The victory was his first for Stewart-Haas Racing, in just their sixth race together, suggesting that it could prove a very productive partnership, and one that a reflective Busch said he has learned to approach with a more mature attitude.

"I ran a lot of my early part of my career as an individual and I didn't respect my team, my team owners," Busch said, adding that having Tony Stewart as a team owner has helped him learn the value of better team communication. Celebrating in Victory Lane also was emotional, too, because he got to do it for the first time with girlfriend Patricia's son, Houston.

"It was pretty emotional. To see him starry eyed and not knowing what he needed to do and I was directing him where he needed to stand and where he could see it all

better and put him up on stage," Busch said, his voice cracking. "And to have him break down in tears, it got me crossed up because I've been trying to deliver for him ... It kind of took it to a new level."

Busch did it by passing Martinsville master Jimmie Johnson for the lead with 10 laps to go and holding off the eight-time winner to win at the track for the first time since October 2002. It was his 25th career Cup-level victory, and that it came in the most unlikely of places suggested to Busch that he's finally in the right place, team-wise and personally.

"You've got to put life in perspective, and you have to learn from your mistakes and you can't just sit there and try to muscle your way individually through certain situations," he said. "And so you rely on your experience level, you rely on your team, and this is a great day for me to be able to lift the trophy in Victory Lane for Stewart-Haas Racing."

Johnson, with eight wins in 25 career starts on the 0.526-mile oval, led 11 times for 296 laps. He seemed on his way to another victory when he took the lead from Busch with 17 laps remaining. But Busch stayed close, ducked underneath Johnson seven laps later and Johnson had nothing left to make a run at the lead, making for a polite-

looking finish.

"That's all I had," Johnson said. "Man, I ran the rear tires off the car."

Just ahead, Busch wasn't sure he could hang on. He hadn't finished in the top

10 in his last 16 starts here. "I've been on this journey for a while and every time you come to Martinsville, you just kind of draw a line through it like there's no way I'll be able to challenge those Hendrick guys or be up in the top 10," Busch said.

When it was over, Busch brushed aside talk about his in-race comments about his feud with Kesel-

owski, who claimed that Busch "just drove right through me and ruined my day" on pit road, causing Keselowski to lose 30 laps and retaliate.

"He tried to flatten all four

of my tires," Busch said of his former teammate with Roger Penske Racing. "That's a no fly zone. ... He will get what he gets back when I decide to give it back."

The race featured an event-record 33 lead changes, and Johnson expected there would be one more, but on a slippery day on the smallest circuit in NASCAR's pre-

mier series, the cars at the end weren't conducive to typical short-track racing. "We were so on edge slipping and sliding," Johnson said about the final laps duel, during which there



Driver Jimmie Johnson, (48) drives through Turn 4 as teammate Dale Earnhardt Jr. (88) follows in the closing laps of NASCAR Sprint Cup Series auto race at Martinsville Speedway in Martinsville, Va., Sunday, March 30, 2014.
Associated Press

was very little of the beating and banging that usually typifies end-of-the-day racing at Martinsville. "I think the lack of security in our own car kept us from feeling more racy and putting a bumper to someone or really getting inside someone aggressively." Dale Earnhardt Jr. was third, followed by Joey Logano and Marcos Ambrose. □

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Djokovic beats Nadal to win 4th Key Biscayne title

STEVEN WINE

AP Sports Writer

KEY BISCAYNE, Florida (AP) — Novak Djokovic

stretched like a rubber band to hit a backhand. He sprinted into the other corner and scooped out forehands as if he was wielding a shovel. He ran forward to slice a ball off his shoetops. And he flicked a difficult half-volley past a weary Rafael Nadal for a winner.

That was just on the last point.

With superior attack and defense, Djokovic earned his fourth Key Biscayne title, while Nadal failed again trying for his first. Djokovic took charge midway through the first set Sunday and closed out the victory by winning a remarkable exchange to beat Nadal 6-3, 6-3 in the final of the Sony Open.

"This tournament has been perfect from the beginning to the end," Djokovic said. "The matches that I have played I played really well, and I elevated my game as the tournament progressed. The best performance of the tournament came in the right moment on Sunday, against the biggest rival."



Novak Djokovic, of Serbia, holds his winner's trophy after defeating Rafael Nadal, of Spain, 6-3, 6-3 during the Sony Open Tennis in Key Biscayne, Fla., Sunday, March 30, 2014.

Associated Press

Nadal fell to 0-4 in finals at Key Biscayne, one of just three ATP Masters 1000 events he has yet to win.

"No frustration. That's tennis," he said. "I tried everything. I tried my best. It was not enough. The opponent was just better than me, and when the opponent is better, he's better."

As for Djokovic, only six-time champion Andre Agassi has won the men's event more.

Djokovic erased the only break point he faced,

committed just 15 unforced errors and won a scrambling, 30-shot rally on the final point with a series of improbable saves. He then dropped his racket, threw up his arms and collapsed on his back as the crowd roared.

He completed a March sweep after beating Roger Federer in the final at Indian Wells two weeks ago. Even so, Nadal will remain ranked No. 1 and Djokovic No. 2.

Either Nadal or Djokovic is

the reigning champion in all nine Masters 1000 tournaments. Is Nadal glad to have Djokovic as a rival?

"No," Nadal said with a smile. "I like challenges, but I am not stupid."

Djokovic had a different take on the rivalry, and credited Nadal and Federer for helping him to become a six-time Grand Slam champion.

"Because of Rafa and because of Roger, I am what I am today," Djokovic said. "All the big matches I lost to these guys, not winning the big matches, they made me understand what I need to do on the court."

Nadal and Djokovic have played 40 matches, the most of any men's pairing in the Open era, and few have been so lopsided.

"I didn't have any letdowns throughout the whole match," Djokovic said. "I was in a very high level — serve, backhand, cross-court, forehand. I have done everything right, and I'm thrilled with my performance."

Nadal stood six feet behind the baseline to return and often remained on the defensive from there, with his shots lacking their normal depth. Djokovic was quick

to step into the court and even won a point playing serve and volley.

Chasing down shots Nadal usually counts as winners, Djokovic won the majority of long rallies. Serving well, Djokovic also won most of the short points.

Nadal said he felt fine physically, and his problem was Djokovic. "He was having too much success with every shot," Nadal said.

Nadal's lone break-point chance came in the opening game, and he failed to convert. Djokovic broke in the sixth game, hitting three consecutive winners before Nadal put a backhand in the net.

Djokovic broke again in the opening game of the second set by winning a 22-shot exchange, and he held serve the rest of the way.

"I did not want to lose focus for a second," Djokovic said, "because I knew that Rafa is a kind of a player that if you allow him, if you give him a chance, he's going to capitalize."

The clay-court season looms, and the result might be different when the rivalry resumes on Nadal's favorite surface. He still leads the series, 22-18. □



□ Boston Bruins' Reilly Smith (18) scores the game-winning goal past Philadelphia Flyers' Steve Mason (35) during a shootout in an NHL hockey game on Sunday, March 30, 2014, in Philadelphia. Boston won 4-3.

Associated Press

By AARON BRACY

Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — There is no secret to Boston's road success. The Bruins play

their system and play it well no matter where they play. Patrice Bergeron scored the go-ahead goal in the second period and also

Bruins beat Flyers 4-3 for 9th straight road win

tallied in the shootout to help Boston to a 4-3 victory over the Philadelphia Flyers on Sunday.

The Bruins have won nine straight road games, a single-season club record.

"Just being smart, playing the system and not forcing plays," Bergeron said. "Every time we take what's there, we have success."

Reilly Smith, the fifth Boston shooter, clinched the victory in the shootout for the Bruins, who ended March 15-1-1.

"That's pretty impressive," Bruins coach Claude Julien said. "They've stayed focused, they've stayed humble, they've stayed determined. I'm very proud

of the way we've handled this month."

Vincent Lecavalier scored twice for the Flyers, including the game-tying goal with 25 seconds left in regulation. Lecavalier's first goal was the 400th of his career. "I've always wanted to have a long career, but you don't come into the league saying, 'I want a certain amount of goals,'" Lecavalier said. "You come into the league saying, 'I want to win the Stanley Cup.' I never even thought about 400. Now that it was today I was proud of it, but as a hockey player your goal is to win a Stanley Cup."

Kimmo Timonen also scored for Philadelphia, which has

lost three of four to remain in third place in the Metropolitan Division.

"I thought our team competed real hard," Flyers coach Craig Berube said. "They had an attitude today that they were going to show them something and I think they did. I know the outcome wasn't what we wanted, but we attacked and put a lot of pucks at the net."

Andrej Meszaros and Zdeno Chara also scored, and Tuukka Rask made a career-high 49 saves for the Bruins. "They play their system to a 'T' no matter what," Berube said. "They don't vary from it. They're a very competitive, heavy team." □

No national system to track landslide hazards

**GOSIA WOZNIACKA
PHUONG LE**

Associated Press

SEATTLE (AP) — People living in the path of a deadly Washington state landslide had virtually no warning before a wall of mud, trees and other debris thundered down the mountain. Some of the homeowners didn't even know the hillside could give way at any time.

Unlike the warning systems and elaborate maps that help residents and officials prepare for natural disasters such as floods and hurricanes, there's no national system to monitor slide activity and no effort under way to produce detailed nationwide landslide hazard maps.

The U.S. Geological Survey doesn't track or inventory slide areas on a national scale, despite an ambitious plan to do so more than a decade ago when Congress directed it to come up with a national strategy to reduce landslide losses. That's left states and communities to put together a patchwork of maps showing landslide hazards. In some cases, they are discovering that more buildings than previously thought are sitting on unstable ground. Even then, that information may not make its way to property owners.

Building a nationwide system is now possible with new technology, experts say, but would require spending tens of millions of dollars annually and could take more than a decade to complete with the help of states and cities. So far, however, there has been little public outcry for faster, concerted action.

"No one has pushed it, and it hasn't been a priority," said Scott Burns, a geology professor at Portland State University. "It's costly to monitor it, and we don't want to pay for it."

He added, "Now they're seeing these large disasters and saying this is important."

The challenge, experts say, is that many landslides are



In this photo taken in October 2012, released by WSI, a Quantum Spatial Company, sensor operators Lennie Rummel left, and Drew Wendeborn, right, are shown inside a helicopter taking measurements with LIDAR, a high-tech laser system mounted on the aircraft, to build a detailed elevation map of the terrain above Omak, Wash. The maps can be used by planners and homeowners to begin to assess landslide risk.

inactive or cause consistent low-level damage, while big, destructive landslides happen only sporadically and don't cause the type of spectacular devastation hurricanes, earthquakes or tornadoes do — so they often don't get the same attention or resources.

Despite this, landslides have exacted a toll in all 50 states, causing 25 to 50 deaths a year and up to \$2 billion in losses annually. The last national map, which shows high landslide risk areas in the Appalachians, the Rockies and along the West Coast, was published in 1982, but it is outdated and lacks detail.

The lack of attention on landslides comes as experts say increasing numbers of people are moving farther out from cities and suburbs — or onto previously uninhabited slopes within them — and are more likely to come face to face not just with the views they sought but also with nature's destructive forces. Development on vulnerable land can disturb soil, put too much weight on slopes, or increase soil moisture, whether it is from runoff or a prolific sprinkler system.

Lynn Highland, a geographer with the USGS's National Landslide Informa-

tion Center, said she and others have advocated for a national landslide inventory, but the agency's Landslide Hazards Program only has an annual budget of \$3.5 million and a staff of about 20.

"It's expensive and everybody seems to be satisfied with dealing with landslides when they come, except when we get a big one like this," she said, referring to the March 22 slide that killed at least 18 in Oso, about 55 miles northeast of Seattle, in what could be one of the worst natural disasters in the state's history. Weary of landslides constantly threatening homes, power lines and underground pipes, some states aren't waiting for disasters to hit. Oregon, North Carolina, Kentucky and others have used high-tech lasers mounted on aircraft to begin to assess landslide risk and build maps that could be used by planners and homeowners.

The air-borne laser, known as LIDAR, fires rapid laser pulses at a surface and a sensor on the instrument measures the amount of time it takes for each pulse to bounce back — building a detailed elevation map, point by point.

These mapping efforts

are turning up previously overlooked dangers: More homes and businesses than previously thought are sitting on hillsides, coastal bluffs and mountain areas that could give way at any time.

"We discovered that in most places we had only found a tenth to a quarter of existing landslides in previous mapping efforts," said Ian Madin, chief scientist for the Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries.

While a national LIDAR mapping effort is planned to start in 2015, USGS scientists have worked in regions such as Washington state's Puget Sound to pinpoint landslide hazards. In Seattle, they developed a forecasting tool that acts as an early warning system to let city officials know when intense rainfall could likely cause rain-soaked hillsides to buckle.

Jim Lee, a senior engineer with Seattle Public Utilities, said when that rain threshold is reached, landslide response crews are put on standby so they are ready to clear downed power lines, mud-covered streets or check on water lines. The National Weather Service in Seattle also will issue statements about potential

landslides once the threshold is reached.

Tracking landslides is difficult because all the action happens underground and slides vary from hillside to hillside depending on soil, hydrology and geologic conditions, experts say, so much so that damage is typically excluded from typical private property insurance.

The lack of private insurance for landslide damage results, in part, from the difficulty in estimating the likelihood that a landslide will occur at any particular location, a USGS study found. "We might be able to get a handle on insurance for landslide if we have an inventory," Highland said.

The USGS started a landslide inventory pilot project for states but ran out of money. A dozen states participated, including Oregon, Washington, California, Louisiana and Pennsylvania. But even if scientists can map all the existing landslides and are able to monitor those that are active, they still don't know how to narrow down to the most vulnerable locations where landslides can turn into a disaster, said Jonathan Stock, director of the USGS Innovation Center for Earth Sciences in California.

"Of the tens of thousands of similar landslides that are slowly moving around the nation, we still don't know which have the potential to be pathological," Stock said.

For now, the USGS runs a half dozen monitoring research projects to understand conditions in soil that precede landslides driven by big storms. In the San Francisco Bay area, where storms have caused hundreds to thousands of slides at a time in recent years, instruments measure such soil characteristics as moisture level and water pressure.

Some communities are working to develop regulations that would guide development on landslide-prone areas. □

Associated Press

Apple-Samsung skirmish heads to court

MARTHA MENDOZA

AP National Writer

SAN JOSE, California (AP)

— The fiercest rivalry in the world of smartphones is heading back to court this week in the heart of the Silicon Valley, with Apple and Samsung accusing each other, once again, of ripping off designs and features.

The trial will mark the latest round in a long-running

scheduled to begin Monday in another round of litigation, with Apple Inc. accusing Samsung of infringing on five patents on newer devices, including Galaxy smartphones and tablets. In a counterclaim, Samsung says Apple stole two of its ideas to use on iPhones and iPads.

"Apple revolutionized the market in personal computing devices," Apple

call the number or put the address into a map. In addition, Apple says Samsung copied "Slide to Unlock," which allows users to swipe the face of their smartphone to use it.

Samsung countered that Apple is stealing a wireless technology system that speeds up sending and receiving data.

The most attention grabbing claim in the case



The Apple iPhone 4s, left, is displayed next to the Samsung Galaxy S III at a store in San Francisco. Apple already has won nearly \$1 billion in judgments against Samsung over patent infringements involving older-model devices. Now Apple is alleging Samsung's newest devices, such as its Galaxy S III, also copied Apple technology. Jury selection for the case begins Monday, March 31, 2014.

(AP Photo/Marcio Jose Sanchez)

series of lawsuits between the two tech giants that underscore a much larger concern about what is allowed to be patented.

"There's a widespread suspicion that lots of the kinds of software patents at issue are written in ways that cover more ground than what Apple or any other tech firm actually invented," Notre Dame law professor Mark McKenna said. "Overly broad patents allow companies to block competition."

The latest Apple-Samsung case will be tried less than two years after a federal jury found the South Korean firm was infringing on Apple patents. Samsung was ordered to pay about \$900 million but is appealing and has been allowed to continue selling products using the technology. Now, jury selection is

attorneys wrote in court filings. "Samsung, in contrast, has systematically copied Apple's innovative technology and products, features and designs, and has deluged markets with infringing devices."

Samsung countered that it has broken technological barriers with its own ultra-slim, lightweight phones.

"Samsung has been a pioneer in the mobile device business sector since the inception of the mobile device industry," Samsung attorneys wrote. "Apple has copied many of Samsung's innovations in its Apple iPhone, iPod, and iPad products."

In the upcoming case, Apple claims Samsung stole a tap-from-search technology that allows someone searching for a telephone number or address on the web to tap on the results to

is Apple's demand that Samsung pay a \$40 royalty for each Samsung device running software allegedly conceived by Apple, more than five times more than the amount sought in the previous trial and well above other precedents between smartphone companies. If Apple prevails, the costs to Samsung could reach \$2 billion. Apple's costs, if it lost, are expected to be about \$6 million. "You rarely get from the jury what you ask for, so companies aim high," German patent analyst Florian Mueller said. "But in my opinion this is so far above a reasonable level the judge should not have allowed it."

The problem, he said, is that each smartphone has thousands of patented ideas in it; Apple is challenging just five. □

Sommer Column: It's starting to look like 1999

JEFF SOMMER

© 2014 New York Times

It sure looks like a bubble.

Maybe not the entire stock market, but consider this: Airbnb, an Internet middleman that connects travelers and people with rooms to rent, was recently valued at more than \$10 billion. That's an impressive price tag for a company that's "a lot like a hotel chain without the hotels," as Jay Ritter, a business professor at the University of Florida, succinctly put it. Airbnb has few fixed costs and plenty of room to grow, he said, and it could end up dominating its field. Still, at \$10 billion, Airbnb would be worth more than the entire Hyatt hotel chain.

The number startled me, yet when I looked into it, I found that it's not wildly out of line with prices that other Internet companies have fetched lately. Just last week, King Digital Entertainment, which makes "Candy Crush Saga," an online video game, went public at a valuation of more than \$7 billion. It's a great video game, friends and colleagues tell me. As Gail Collins wrote in December: "It's about matching little colored thingies on your iPad or phone." Fun! But \$7 billion? Really?

Based on King Digital's first day of trading, I wasn't the only one asking those kinds of questions. But that's just the start: There's also Facebook. Its market capitalization has already exceeded \$150 billion and, as a publicly traded company, it hasn't even reached its second birthday. But Facebook is everywhere these days, and it is spending plenty of money.

Last week, it announced that it was buying a company called Oculus VR, whose main product is headsets for virtual reality. Granted, virtual reality could become a big part of our everyday reality someday. But is the company, which has very little revenue for now, worth the \$2 billion that Facebook plans to pay for it? That price may have seemed

cheap to Mark Zuckerberg, Facebook's founder. After all, only a month earlier, Facebook said that it was buying WhatsApp, a social media company with modest sales, for a price that may reach \$19 billion. Zuckerberg said that was a bargain, and maybe he's right, but WhatsApp's revenue doesn't demonstrate it. Let's not forget the biotech sector. The headlines haven't been as big for biotech startups, but the valuations are just as stretched by some measures. In the first quarter this year, 45 percent of all companies that filed for initial public offerings were in biotech, and not a single one reported "positive earnings," according to Ritter, who is an authority on IPOs. In other words, they all lost money, yet they were valued at a median of \$199 million.

In short, it's beginning to look a lot like 1999 or early 2000 - although not for the whole market or large-cap stocks. Those crucial areas may well be overvalued after five years of enormous gains (and Facebook is now a large-cap stock). But the numbers suggest that the overall Standard & Poor's 500-stock index is still tethered to reality, at least compared with the stratospheric prices that investors routinely paid in the market bubble that burst in 2000.

What's striking is that the Internet and biotech groups were the beating heart of irrational exuberance in that earlier bubble, and they are setting off alarms again.

In the last few weeks, publicly traded stocks in these two sectors have begun falling, after a gravity-defying rise. The Nasdaq Internet index is down more than 11 percent since peaking March 6. It gained more than 63 percent in the previous 12 months. The Nasdaq Biotechnology index peaked Feb. 25. In the previous 12 months, it gained 90 percent. Since then, it has dropped 16 percent.

Continued on Page 27

Charter Communications contests Comcast-Time Warner Cable deal

EDWARD WYATT

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WASHINGTON - Charter Communications, which was rebuffed last year when it proposed a merger with Time Warner Cable, then lost out to Comcast in a bidding competition for the cable company, is urging the Time Warner Cable shareholders to reject the \$45 billion deal with Comcast.

In a proxy statement filed this weekend with the Securities and Exchange Commission, Charter said the risk of regulatory rejection of the merger, combined with what it characterized as probable delays and their associated costs to Time Warner Cable shareholders, made it in shareholders' interest to turn down the merger. The deal was announced Feb. 13.

The board of Time Warner Cable also "refused to meaningfully engage with Charter" about a proposed offer, the company said. Charter said its fourth and best offer was "in the low \$130s per share range," including \$83 a share in cash.

Time Warner Cable agreed to merge with Comcast in an all-stock transaction that was worth about \$141 a share based on Thursday's closing stock prices. When the deal was announced, the companies estimated that it was worth \$159 a share.

"From the regulatory perspective, it is difficult to imagine a transaction that could concentrate the industry more than the proposed Comcast merger," Charter said in its SEC filing. "Notwithstanding the likelihood of a regulatory opposition to the deal, the merger agreement contains no regulatory break-up fee, giving Comcast no incentive to seek solutions," the filing said, beyond the limited commitments Comcast made to divest itself of 3 million Time Warner customers and to extend to Time Warner assets the conditions it agreed to when it acquired NBC Uni-

versal in 2011.

In a statement, Time Warner Cable said: "We are fully committed to our merger with Comcast, which we believe is in the best interests of shareholders." A spokeswoman for Comcast declined to comment and deferred to Time Warner Cable.

The Justice Department's antitrust division has begun an investigation of the merger. The Federal Communications Commission will also conduct an investigation to determine if the transaction is in "the public interest."

The inquiry will begin once Comcast files a public interest statement with the commission; that is expected in early April.

The antitrust subcommittee of the Senate Judiciary Committee is expected to begin its own investigation; the subcommittee will conduct a hearing April 9 that will feature representatives from Comcast and from public interest groups that oppose the merger, among others.

In its filing, Charter said it first floated the idea of a merger on May 22, at a meeting between Gregory Maffei, a Charter director and chief executive of Liberty Media, a large Charter shareholder, and Glenn Britt, then chief executive of Time Warner Cable.

At about the same time, John C. Malone, chairman of Liberty Media, spoke with the lead director of Time Warner Cable's board to discuss a combination of Charter and Time Warner Cable. The two spoke again in February, after Charter and Time Warner Cable broke off negotiations, but they were unable to advance the talks.

Four detailed offers followed from Charter over the next seven months. In January, Time Warner Cable's board rejected Charter's offer. Two days after Charter nominated a slate of directors to the board of Time Warner Cable in February, that company announced its deal with Comcast. □

A Lone Ranger of the 401(k)s

GRETCHEN MORGENSON

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The arithmetic could not be simpler. The more fees you pay in your 401(k) plan, the less cash you'll have for retirement.

Still, fees hidden from view can make it hard for 401(k) holders to find out what they are paying. Plan sponsors, usually an employer, have a fiduciary duty to safeguard workers' retirement accounts. But sponsors don't always push providers like mutual funds to reduce fees or cut costs. That may be about to change. On March 19, the 8th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, in St. Louis, affirmed a lower-court ruling in one of the first 401(k) fee cases to go to trial. In that case, the court found that ABB Inc., a power and automation technology company, failed to monitor its plan's internal costs and paid excessive fees by not negotiating for rebates from investment companies whose funds were offered in the plan. This, the court said, violated ABB's fiduciary duties to the 401(k) participants.

The lower court awarded \$13.4 million to the ABB plan participants in that part of the case.

The significance of this ruling extends far beyond ABB. It sends a powerful message to plan sponsors everywhere: If you think you've done your fiduciary duty simply by offering low-cost funds as investment options, think again.

The suit on behalf of ABB's plan participants was filed by Jerome J. Schlichter, a partner at Schlichter Bogard & Denton in St. Louis. Since he began suing companies over fiduciary failures eight years ago, he has settled six 401(k) cases, including ones against General Dynamics, International Paper and Caterpillar.

The settlements have generated \$125 million in recoveries to 300,000 participants, minus legal fees, and secured major reductions in plan costs for the future. Five more cases filed by Schlichter

are pending; one was dismissed.

The good news for all 401(k) holders is that Schlichter's cases are gaining traction in the courts. On Monday, the Supreme Court signaled its interest in a case he filed against Edison International, a California utility. Edison had placed plan participants in high-cost retail mutual funds when cheaper institutional choices were available, and the high court asked



Jerome J. Schlichter, a partner at Schlichter Bogard & Denton in St. Louis. Several federal judges have likened Schlichter to a private attorney general. His firm, one judge said, has risked "breathtaking amounts of time and money while overcoming many obstacles for the benefit of employees and retirees."

(Handout Photo)

the U.S. solicitor general to state the government's views on the issues in the case.

"As these cases have progressed and the settlements occurred, more judges are understanding the practices and the harm to retirees," Schlichter said. "A body of law is developing, setting out fiduciary practices and standards."

Each case differs, but most involve high and often hidden fees levied on 401(k) participants. An example is the case involving the employee retirement plan of Lockheed Martin, the military contractor. Lockheed's plan is one of the nation's largest, with 100,000 participants and \$22 billion in assets as of December 2012, the most recent public figures available. State Street

Bank and Trust acts as investment manager and trustee to the plan.

For years, Schlichter said, Lockheed officials allowed State Street to receive large and hidden fees from plan investments in addition to an annual record-keeping fee of \$4 million to \$8 million. Plan participants, he contends, lost hundreds of millions of dollars as a result.

State Street also collected fees for managing an employee investment option containing only Lockheed shares and cash. Single-stock portfolios like this typically don't require much management. But State Street received fees totaling 0.02 percent of the \$6 billion-plus stock fund each year, documents in the lawsuit show. And the cash in the Lockheed fund went into a State Street investment fund, which generated more fees for the bank.

State Street's dual roles, Schlichter contends, allowed it to dictate how much cash would be held and to pay itself to manage that cash.

The Lockheed case, filed in 2006, may finally head to trial this year.

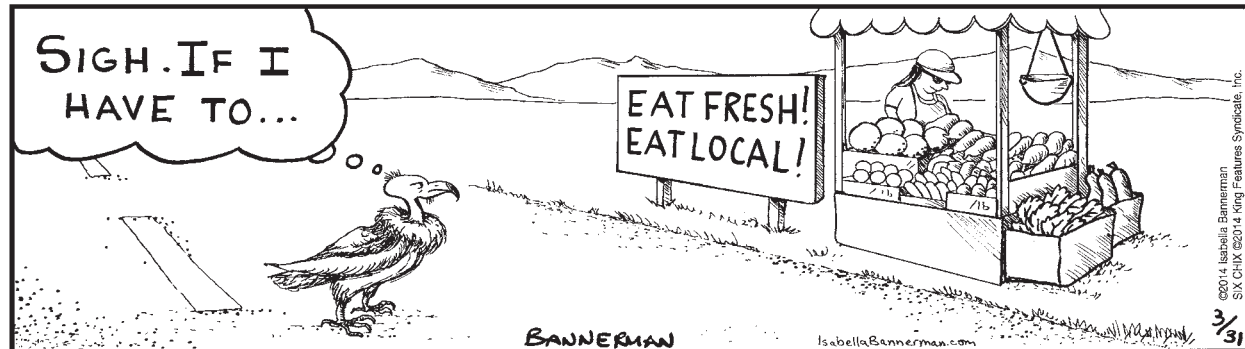
Gordon Johndroe, a spokesman for the company, said in a statement: "Lockheed Martin believes all allegations made by plaintiffs' counsel are false and remains committed to defending against this lawsuit at all stages of the litigation." A spokeswoman for State Street issued a statement saying that the firm had not been sued and that "we strongly deny any allegations that we received unreasonable fees for services that we provided to the plans." The statement continued: "We are committed to making full disclosures to our clients regarding these services and the terms on which they are provided."

Cases can be costly to litigate. ABB, for example, has spent \$42 million on lawyers' fees defending the matter, court records show. □

Mutts



6 Chix



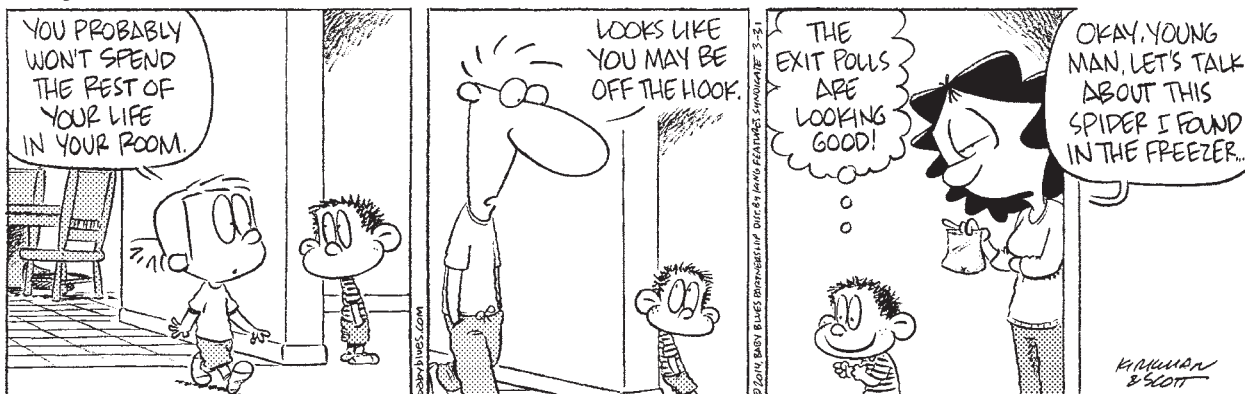
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Baby Blues



Zits



Conceptis Sudoku

5		6			8		3	2
			6		4	9		5
2				3			7	
	2				9		5	3
		9				2		
4	7		5				8	
	6			7				1
3		5	2		1			
1	4		9			3		8

Difficulty Level ★

3/31

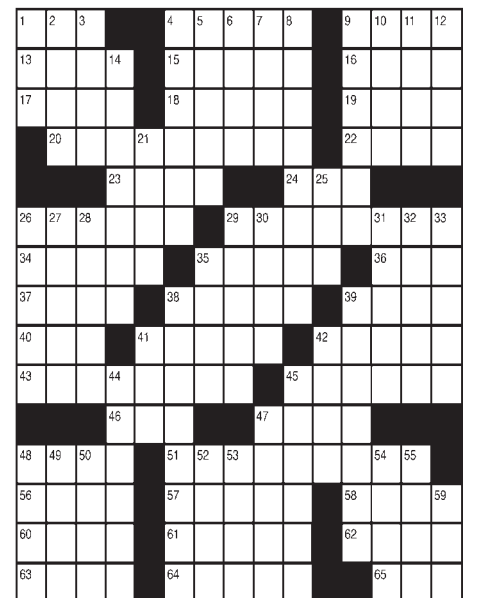
Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Saturday's puzzle answer

3	1	9	4	7	2	6	5	8
8	5	4	3	1	6	7	9	2
6	7	2	5	9	8	4	1	3
1	9	7	2	5	3	8	6	4
5	4	3	8	6	9	1	2	7
2	8	6	7	4	1	5	3	9
7	3	5	1	2	4	9	8	6
9	2	1	6	8	7	3	4	5
4	6	8	9	3	5	2	7	1

ACROSS

- Door opener
- Theater walkway
- Charitable donation
- On ___ own; independent
- EEG's focus
- Underground plant part
- Doing nothing
- Poet Teasdale & actress Rue
- Created
- Wheel in the trunk
- A fresh
- Not unbalanced
- Prefix for wife or section
- Skillful
- Canada's Newfoundland and ___
- Noise
- Chivalrous about
- Sings with the lips closed
- Soldier's gun
- On ___ and needles; jumpy
- Recede
- Italian poet ___
- Aligner
- Explorer ___ de León
- Laws
- Tennis player's need
- Japanese sash
- Butcher shop purchase
- Greek cheese
- Witnesses
- Chopping tools
- Cozy recesses in a room
- Fairy ___; fable
- Move suddenly
- Valuable item
- Tater
- TV show award
- City in England
- Last year's jrs.
- Goulash, e.g.
- Spring and fall
- Bug spray
- Dublin's nation: abbr.
- Blaze residue
- In ___; uncertain
- Cuban dance
- Upper spaces in a barn
- Qualified
- Beverage
- 1/16 of a pound
- Bowling alley button
- Four and five



Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

3/31/14

Saturday's Puzzle Solved

DOWN

- Pretty pond fish
- Concludes
- Sharp bark
- Not in school
- Furious
- Calcutta garb
- Dishonest one
- Musical group
- Fleet of ships
- Bank's offering
- Apple pie à la
-
- Spring and fall
- Bug spray
- Dublin's nation: abbr.
- Blaze residue
- In ___; uncertain
- Cuban dance
- Upper spaces in a barn
- Qualified
- Beverage
- 1/16 of a pound
- Bowling alley button
- Four and five

PATE	SPINS	SLAT
IRON	PANIC	TAXI
LETS	ASNER	RILL
EASIEST	CABARET	
GYM	REPAY	
STONE	GAS	KEACH
PETS	RAM	REDSEA
ANT	DILATED	PAS
TEEMED	DEF	BEST
STRAP	RAN	HONEY
TOKEN	CAR	
PLOTTED	CAMELOT	
LOPE	ACORN	DANA
OVER	TABOO	OVEN
YENS	SPICE	MASK

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3/31/14

- Reasonable
- Billiard table corners
- Give a nickname to
- Leave the car
- Warm & cozy
- Perches
- Jabbed
- Lose color
- Test
- Semester or quarter
- Schnoz
- Suffer defeat
- Knocks
- Put-down
- Asner & others

It's starting to look like 1999

Continued from Page 24

New IPOs, meanwhile - along with companies being valued in mergers and acquisitions and other transactions - are commanding prices that some strategists say will turn out to be unsupportable.

"There are definitely speculative excesses in the market right now," said Doug Kass, president of Seabreeze Partners Management. "I don't think the whole market is in a bubble. But in biotech and some of the Internet stocks, there's no question - we've certainly got bubblelike symptoms. And the IPO market looks like a bubble, and that's serious, because that's where the first signs of the bear market that started in 2000 began."

It's not clear where these sectors are headed now. So far at least, they seem to be operating quite separately from the rest of the market. Figures from the Bespoke Investment Group tell the story. One important metric is the price-to-earnings ratio. In 2000, for

the 10 biggest stocks in the S&P 500 by market cap, the P/E was 62.6. Today, the comparable number is only 16.1. Back in March 2000, Cisco had the highest P/E among the 10 biggest stocks, at 196.2, followed by Oracle, at 148.4. Those numbers were so high that when sentiment turned, the stocks plummeted.

Today, only one stock in the big 10 has a P/E above 30: Google, the sole Internet company in the group. Its P/E is 33.3, double the current average for the S&P 500's 10 biggest companies, but compared with the levels that prevailed in 2000, it is reasonably priced. If earnings grow rapidly, Google could conceivably be profitable for investors at its current valuation.

Even if prices are high in the overall market, they are being backed up by earnings to a much larger extent than in 2000. That's important, because back then, when the dot-com bubble burst, the downturn brought most companies down with it. And that's why some people applauded when shares of King Digital. □

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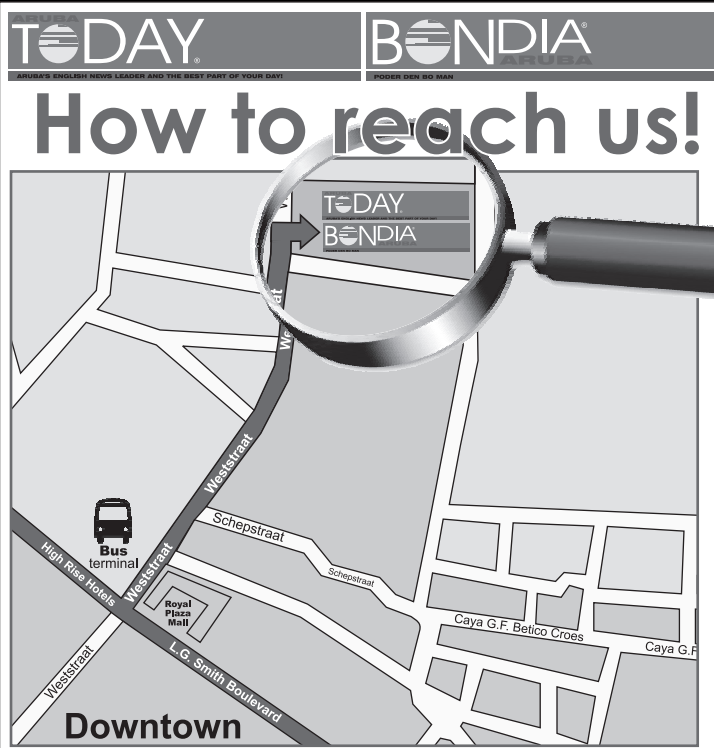
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U.N. science report: Warming worsens security woes

SETH BORENSTEIN
AP Science Writer

YOKOHAMA, Japan (AP) —

In an authoritative report due out Monday a United Nations climate panel for the first time is connecting hotter global temperatures to hotter global tempers. Top scientists are saying that climate change will complicate and worsen existing global security problems, such as civil wars, strife between nations and refugees.

They're not saying it will cause violence, but will be an added factor making things even more dangerous. Fights over resources, like water and energy, hunger and extreme weather will all go into the mix to destabilize the world a bit more, says the report by the Nobel Peace Prize-winning Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. The summary of the report is being finalized this week-end by the panel in Yokohama.

That's a big change from seven years ago, the last time the IPCC addressed how warming affected Earth, said report lead author Chris Field of the Carnegie Institution of Science in California. The summary that political leaders read in early 2007 didn't mention security issues will, he said, because of advances in research.

"There's enough smoke there that we really need to pay attention to this," said Ohio University security and environment professor Geoff Dabelko, one of the lead authors of the report's chapter on security and climate change.

For the past seven years, research in social science has found more links between climate and conflict, study authors say, with the full report referencing hun-



Syrian refugees cross into Iraq at the Peshkhabour border point in Dahuk, 260 miles (430 kilometers) northwest of Baghdad, Iraq, Tuesday, Aug. 20, 2013.

Associated Press

dreds of studies on climate change and conflict.

The U.S. Defense Department earlier this month in its once-every-four-years strategic review, called climate change a "threat multiplier" to go with poverty, political instability and social tensions worldwide. Warming will trigger new problems but also provide countries new opportunities for resources and shipping routes in places such as the melting Arctic, the Pentagon report says.

After the climate panel's 2007 report, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon wrote that along with other causes, the conflict in the Darfur region of western Sudan "began as an ecological crisis, arising at least in part from climate change." While the IPCC report this year downplays global warming's role in that particular strife, saying other issues were far more influential, the report's drafts do add that there is "justifiable



In this Dec. 17, 2011 file photo, an Egyptian protester throws a stone toward soldiers, unseen, as a building burns during clashes near Tahrir Square, in Cairo, Egypt.

common concern" that climate change increases the risk of fighting in similar circumstances.

"Climate change will not directly cause conflict — but it will exacerbate issues of poor governance, resource inequality and social unrest," retired U.S. Navy Adm. David Titley, now a Pennsylvania State University professor of meteorology, wrote in an email. "The Arab Spring and Syria are two recent examples." But Titley, who wasn't part of the IPCC report, says "if you are already living in a place affected by violent conflict — I suspect climate change becomes the least of your worries."

That illustrates the tricky calculus of climate and conflict, experts say. It's hard to point at violence and draw

a direct climate link — to say how much blame goes to warming and how much is from more traditional factors like poverty and ethnic differences. Then looking into future is even more difficult.

"If you think it's hard to predict rainfall in one spot 100 years from now, it's even harder to predict social stability," said Jeff Severinghaus, a climate scientist at the Scripps Institution for Oceanography who isn't part of this climate panel. "Obviously that's going to be controversial. Severinghaus and other scientists say this will be one of the more contentious issues as the panel representing more than 100 nations meets here and edits word-by-word a 30-page summary of the multi-volume

report for political leaders. Observers said the closed door meeting went through the security and climate section Sunday, in the hurried last hours of editing.

There's an entire 63-page chapter on security problems, but most leaders will read the handful of paragraphs summarizing that and that's where there may be some issues, he says.

The chapter on national security says there is "robust evidence" that "human security will be progressively threatened as climate changes." It says it can destabilize the world in multiple ways by making it harder for people to make a living, increasing mass migrations, and making it harder for countries to keep control of their populations.

The migration issue is big because as refugees flee storms and other climate problems, that adds to security issues, the report and scientists say.

While some climate scientists, environmental groups and politicians see the conflict-climate link as logical and clear, others emphasize nuances in research.

The social science literature has shown an indirect link, especially with making poverty worse, which will add to destabilization, but it is not the same as saying there would be climate wars, said University of Exeter's Neil Adger, one of the study's lead authors. It's not exactly the four horsemen of the apocalypse, he adds.

Joshua Goldstein, an international relations professor and expert on conflict at the University of Massachusetts, sees that link, but says it is probably weaker than people think. It's not as big a problem as other impacts from climate change, like those on ecosystems, weather disasters and economic costs, he says.

Poverty is the issue when it comes to security problems — and policies to fight climate change increase poverty, says David Kreutzer at the conservative Heritage Foundation in Washington. □

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Evan Peters arrives at PALEYFEST 2014 - "American Horror Story: Coven" at the Kodak Theatre on Friday, March 28, 2014, in Los Angeles.

Associated Press

Chiklis joins 'Coven' principals for next 'Horror'

MIKE CIDONI LENNOX
AP Entertainment Reporter
LOS ANGELES (AP) — Michael Chiklis is ready to freak out.

The actor is joining the "American Horror Story" family for the anthology series' fourth season, subtitled "Freak Show." The Emmy-winning star of "The Shield" will portray the ex-husband and father of characters played, respectively, by Kathy Bates and Evan Peters.

The Chiklis casting announcement came during the "American Horror Story: Coven" event that served as closing night of PaleyFest, which over 16 days presented casts and crews of past and present TV series, attracting thousands of fans to the Dolby Theatre.

"Coven," which aired from October 2013 to January 2014 on the FX channel and revolved around witches in a New Orleans boarding school, made for the highest-rated of the three "Horror Story" seasons.

The series' stars present for the PaleyFest panel were surprise attendee Bates, as well as previously announced Peters, Angela Bassett, Jamie Brewer, Frances Conroy, Denis O'Hare, Sarah Paulson, Emma Rob-

erts and Gabourey Sidibe. Actress "Jessica" (Lange) is on spring break with her grandchildren," noted series co-creator Ryan Murphy, who later revealed more season-four casting news: Lange and "every person on this stage is coming back in some capacity," he said.

Murphy explained the setting for the upcoming series "is not a circus and is not carnival, it's a freak show," adding that it was Lange who came up with idea of her character.

Lange will play a German expat in 1950s Jupiter, Florida, who is a "collector of freaks," said Bassett, who continued, "(She) will do anything — and I don't know what 'anything' might be — to keep this dying cottage industry alive just a little bit longer."

All actors queried said they knew little about "Freak Show," except the premise. But, Paulson, for one, clearly can't wait to get back to work in New Orleans, which, this time, will double for Jupiter.

"All I want is a peg leg and a black tooth ... and a hunchback," Paulson said, laughing.

"American Horror Story: Freak Show" is set to debut this fall. □

'Noah' rises to top of box office with \$44M debut



This image released by Paramount Pictures shows Emma Watson in a scene from "Noah."

Associated Press

DERRIK J. LANG
AP Entertainment Writer
LOS ANGELES (AP) — After weathering a sea of controversy, "Noah" arrived in first place at the weekend box office.

Paramount's biblical epic starring Russell Crowe in the titular role opened with \$44 million, according to studio estimates Sunday.

The imaginative take on the tale of Noah's Ark from "Black Swan" director Darren Aronofsky led some religious groups to claim the story had been inaccurately portrayed and prompted Paramount to add a disclaimer to marketing materials noting that "artistic license has been taken" in telling the story.

The polarizing attention apparently paid off for "Noah," which features such additions to the well-known Bible story as angelic rock creatures and chic wardrobes for Noah and his family.

"Noah," which also stars Jennifer Connelly and Emma Watson, also sailed smoothly in 22 international markets, such as Russia and Australia, earning \$33.6 million abroad.

"It certainly feels like the film

has really connected with both mainstream moviegoers who are looking for a really sophisticated film and those folks who really want to see a movie that honors their faith," Paramount vice chairman Rob Moore said. "It's been a very interesting journey to get to this point, but it's definitely a spectacular launch."

"Noah," which also stars Jennifer Connelly and Emma Watson, is the latest faith-centric film to appeal to audiences this year. Others include the independently released "God's Not Dead," which earned \$9 million in its second outing this weekend, and "Son of God," whose domestic total now stands at \$57.9 million since opening last month.

"I think these biblical-themed movies are like the next frontier in Hollywood," said Paul Dergarabedian, senior media analyst for box-office tracker Rentrak. "Hollywood hadn't cracked the code on a biblical movie that would have mainstream appeal. Now, I think they've figured it out. We may see a flood — pun intended — coming down the pipeline. We al-

ready have 'Heaven is for Real' and 'Exodus' slated for later this year."

Elsewhere at the box office, Lionsgate's teen science-fiction thriller "Divergent" starring Shailene Woodley earned \$26.5 million in its second weekend, bringing its domestic total to \$95.3 million.

"Muppets Most Wanted," the globe-trotting Muppet sequel from Disney featuring Tina Fey and Ricky Gervais, came in third place with \$11.4 million in its second weekend. The latest Muppet caper's total domestic haul is now at \$33.2 million.

The weekend's other major new release, "Sabotage," flopped in the seventh spot with \$5.3 million. The Open Road action flick starring Arnold Schwarzenegger is the latest failure for the former California governor, whose "The Last Stand" and "Escape Plan" were box-office duds last year. Disney's "Captain America: The Winter Soldier," which opens in the U.S. on Friday, dominated 32 international markets by capturing \$75.2 million. The sequel stars Chris Evans as the patriotic Marvel super-soldier. □

Denzel Washington on 'Raisin' and Sidney Poitier

MARK KENNEDY,
AP Drama Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The Denzel Washington you meet backstage at the Ethel Barrymore Theatre is not exactly living a glamorous Hollywood life. He's more like a college kid during finals.

He wears a black Yankee cap, black sweat pants and blue sneakers. There are free weights on a counter and a bottle of diet cola. Notebooks and papers are everywhere. He's fighting off the New York chill with some chicken noodle soup laced with hot sauce.

"Have a seat," the star says, waving to a banged-up sofa and settling down in his own seat in front of a makeshift desk made from a mini-fridge. "I've got good heat here."

Good heat, comfortable clothes, soup — the unfussy Broadway version of Denzel Washington seems completely in his element as he puts the finishing touches on one of America's greatest plays, "A Raisin in the Sun."

"It's just a great opportunity — that's how I look at it,"



This image released by Philip Rinaldi Publicity shows Denzel Washington, left, and LaTanya Richardson Jackson during a performance of "A Raisin in the Sun," at the Ethel Barrymore Theatre in New York.

says Washington. "It's like getting back to your roots. It's going good. But around about the 70th show, I might be going, 'What am I doing?'"

Like an athlete in training and currently dressed the part, Washington has poured himself into the work, filling two composition books with notes and

leaving every page of his script highlighted, underlined or annotated.

The first notebook starts with the poem "A Dream Deferred" by Langston Hughes, the work that helped inspire the play, which Washington has handwritten. A few pages later is a photo pasted of the playwright, Lorraine

Associated Press

Hansberry ("I got her in there! I forgot I had her in there," he says while flipping through.)

The play marks Washington's first return to Broadway since his Tony Award-winning turn in "Fences" in 2010 and every preview has been sold out, with top premium tickets going for as much as \$348.

"Denzel? Listen, he's a Stradivarius," says co-star LaTanya Richardson Jackson, an old friend and Samuel L. Jackson's wife. "He's so versatile. It's so wonderful being on the stage with him. He's so elegant and so giving."

Set in 1950s Chicago, "A Raisin in the Sun" centers on the struggling Younger family, who anxiously await a \$10,000 insurance check — and the ensuing squabbles over how to spend it. Washington plays Walter Lee, a chauffeur with dreams of opening a liquor store, a role made famous by Sidney Poitier, who played it in the original 1959 production and reprised it in a 1961 movie. In a twist, this revival is in the same theater where Poitier debuted the play.

How far has Washington gone in his research? It turns out all the way to Poitier's home. The two actors recently met to talk about the role and when

Poitier rose to act out scenes, Washington pulled out his cell phone to film it ("As you can see, I'm no cameraman," he jokes as he shares the jerky images).

"He's so generous and complimentary and he was like, 'Oh you're going to kill. You're going to be better than I was,' and all this stuff," Washington says. "He's just a sweet, gentle man. It wasn't even about the play anymore. I was just like, 'I'm going to come hang with him.'"

Washington may be the Academy Award-winning actor known for "Glory" and "Training Day," but he says his dream when he first started acting at Fordham University was to be on-stage.

His first two roles in college were "The Emperor Jones" by Eugene O'Neill and Shakespeare's "Othello."

"I was too ignorant to know what pressure even was," he laughs.

As a young man, Washington once caught James Earl Jones star in "Oedipus the King" uptown and then sneaked into Jones' dressing room, where he hung out as the older actor greeted well-wishers.

"Obviously he didn't know who I was — I was a student.

I'm picking up his rings and his props while he's talking to the people. He probably looked and thought, 'Oh, he's probably a young actor.' I'm like, 'Man, that's what I want. I want to do that.

I want to do what he's doing,'" he says.

The revival of "A Raisin in the Sun" hasn't been completely without drama: Last month, the cast was shook up when Diahann Carroll pulled out and Richardson Jackson stepped in as the family matriarch.

"Diahann realized she just couldn't handle it, physically. If we live long enough, we're all going to come to that place where we go, like, 'OK,'" says Washington. "Even I had my doubts in the beginning. Can I remember all this?" □

Former 'Dynasty' star Kate O'Mara dies at age 74

LONDON (AP) — British actress Kate O'Mara, best known for her role in the 1980s soap opera "Dynasty," died Sunday at the age of 74, her agent said. Phil Belfield said O'Mara died in a nursing home in southern England after a short illness.

The actress, who began her television career in the 1960s, became a household name for playing Cassandra "Caress" Morrell, sister to Joan Collins' Alexis Colby, in "Dynasty."

In Britain she is often remembered for her role in "Triangle" — a soap opera set aboard a North Sea ferry that is often cited as the worst piece of British television. She also appeared in the original run of British series "Doctor Who" and BBC drama "Howards' Way." In



In Oct. 6 1998 file photo, British actress Kate O'Mara poses for photographers.

Associated Press

the 1990s she starred in the comedy show "Absolutely Fabulous" with Joanna Lumley.

More recently she ap-

peared in a 2012 stage adaptation of Agatha Christie's "Death on the Nile."

She is survived by her sister, actress Belinda Carroll. □

The Split of the Ages



CHARLES M. BLOW
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Older voters and younger voters used to be largely on the same page when they went to the polls. No more.

Gallup released two reports about the split this week. The first was called "U.S. Seniors Have Realigned With the Republican Party," and the second was "Young Americans' Affinity for Democratic Party Has Grown." The numbers were striking. Until the age of Obama, Democrats had an ideological leg up among Americans 65 and older. Then those voters shifted to give the Republicans an advantage. That advantage has held, although it's shrinking.

On the other end of the spectrum, Republicans haven't held an ideological advantage among Americans ages 18-29 since 1995. But for a decade, the Republican deficit was always 13 points or less. That changed in 2006 when the Democrats won control of the House and the Senate and a majority of governorships and state legislatures. This was, in part, due to George W. Bush's sinking poll numbers and rising opposition to the wars in Afghanistan and, particularly, in Iraq. The Democratic advantage among young people since then has been 13 points or more.

The last time a Republican won the 18-29-year-old vote in a presidential election was 1988, when 52 percent voted for George H.W. Bush over Democrat Michael Dukakis, who carried only 10 states and the District of Columbia.

Since pollsters began compiling records of voting by age, the only time that Republicans have won the 18-29-year-old vote nationwide in the races for the House of Representatives was in 1994, during the "Republican Revolution." That year, armed with their "Contract With America," Republicans took control of both houses of Congress for the first time in 40 years.

Coincidentally, 1994 was also the year that the percentage of the vote for Republicans was exactly the same among voters ages 18-29 and among voters 60 and older: 51 percent. In fact, until relatively recently, it was not uncommon for the vot-

ing of young and elderly Americans to look virtually identical.

Part of the reason for the Democratic swing among young people is the incredible diversity of the group. Gallup estimates that 45 percent of Americans 18-29 are nonwhite. But that doesn't account for all of the change. As Gallup put it:

"Young adults are not more Democratic solely because they are more racially diverse. In recent years, young white adults, who previously aligned more with the Republican Party, have shifted Democratic. From 1995 to 2005, young whites consistently identified as or leaned Republican rather than Democratic, by an average of 8 points. Since 2006, whites aged 18 to 29 have shown at least a slight Democratic preference in all but one year, with an average advantage of 3 points."

This should come as welcome news to Democrats and as another reason for fear among Republicans.

Furthermore, since 2004 in presidential elections, young Americans' share of the vote has inched up as older Americans' share has fallen. Still, the diversity target is easy and tempting, so Republicans are aggressively pushing voter ID laws. As Politico reported last year, according to a recent study:

"Significantly more minority youths age 18-29 were asked to show identification than white youth: 72.9 percent of black youth were asked for ID, compared with 60.8 percent of Latino youth and 50.8 percent of white youth. Even in states where there are no voter ID laws on the books, 65.5 percent of black youth were asked to show ID at the polls, compared with 55.3 percent of Latino youth and 42.8 percent of white youth."

Racial bias - sometimes subtle, always sinister - is alive and well. This is also the reason there is so much conservative resistance to comprehensive immigration reform.

According to a 2011 Pew Research Hispanic Trends Project report, most of the growth in the U.S. population from 2000 to 2010 was due to Hispanics.

The report found:

"Since 2000, nearly 6 million more Latinos have become eligible to vote. The bulk of this growth was attributable to the 5 million U.S. born Latino youths nationwide who turned 18 during this past decade. That translates into an additional half-million U.S. born Latinos coming of age each year - a pattern that is certain to persist, and grow, in the coming decades."

The wave of demographic change and the liberal leaning of the young can't be held back indefinitely through obstruction and aggression. A change is coming, and it's blue. □



A Christie Life Primer



GAIL COLLINS
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Let's take a minute to search for life lessons in the latest Chris Christie bridge-traffic-jam episode. I believe there are two. First, when the political ship is going down, nobody will bother to rescue the unattached woman and the dork from senior year. Also, it's always handy to have a law degree.

On Friday, Christie held a news conference to discuss the results of an investigation into the now infamous lane closings on the George Washington Bridge. The inquiry was commissioned by, um, Chris Christie. It concluded that the villains were Bridget the Aide and David Who Was Not Popular in High School.

"I had nothing to do with this ... and this report has supported exactly what I said," Christie announced rather triumphantly. Negative minds might substitute "announced pompously with an extreme degree of self-righteousness," but we are taking the high road.

The governor was, indeed, portrayed in a light of near-beatific proportions. He had absolutely no role in the most infamous traffic jam since Woodstock. He was too good, and too busy doing other things, like comforting the victims of a fire - an act of mercy he felt driven to perform even though he had to cancel "a planned trip to Florida with his wife for her birthday."

The investigators acknowledged that one of the evildoers, David

Wildstein, might have informed Christie about the lane-closing plan. This was apparently at a Sept. 11 memorial ceremony, and the report calls it "a reference that the Governor does not recall and, even if actually made, would not have registered with the Governor in any event because he knew nothing about this decision in advance and would not have considered another traffic issue at one of the bridges or tunnels to be memorable."

People, try reading that last quote out loud. Doesn't it sound a tad over-defensive? In a breathless kind of way? Also, if you were the governor and some official came up to you at a 9/11 ceremony and started talking about access lanes on the George Washington Bridge, wouldn't you at least say to yourself: "Hmm, that's a strange topic of conversation." I mean, it would stick in the mind.

The investigators said they could find no real evidence of why the lane closings were organized. But they fingered Wildstein as planner-in-chief. He was an official at the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, which runs the bridge. Aficionados of this story will remember the governor's announcement that while he and Wildstein were high school classmates, they didn't travel in the same circles. ("You know, I was the class president and athlete. I don't know what David was doing during that period of time.") The guy appears to be a real jerk, but you still have to have a little sympathy there.

Bridget Anne Kelly, one of Christie's aides, is depicted in the role of traffic-jam cheerleader, and she is clearly a person of tremendously awful judgment. However, the investigators' description of her behavior was unusually - personal. They noted that Kelly had been dating Christie's political adviser, Bill Stepien. And they suggested that she might have thrown herself into the bridge plot during a breakup

funk. ("Events in Kelly's personal life may have had some bearing on her subjective motivations and state of mind.")

Then when Christie (ever truthful, ever brave) "demanded straight answers from his senior staff," the report says Kelly "panicked." Perhaps this was because she was "habitually concerned about how she was perceived by the Governor," something which is, of course, extremely unusual for people working in a state Capitol.

Kelly, who refused to talk with the investigators, is a single mother, in deep legal trouble, unemployed and utterly abandoned by the state's power structure. Meanwhile, Stepien, who has also declined to cooperate, just got a new job at a consulting company that has strong ties to the Republican Party.

The report found that Bill Baroni, a high-ranking Port Authority official, ignored cries of distress about the traffic jams, all the while texting and emailing with Wildstein. But, the report claimed, he "did not communicate in an overtly partisan or political manner." And no bad feelings about the refusal to talk with investigators. Baroni resigned under fire, but he has since gotten a job at one of the state's top law firms.

The investigators seemed absolutely serene about the refusal to answer questions by David Samson, chairman of the Port Authority. When Samson resigned Friday, Christie thanked him for "his service and his friendship," while expressing shock when a reporter suggested that Samson's law firm might have found it advantageous to have a partner at the head of an organization with a \$27.6 billion capital budget. ("That's your assumption!")

Christie said his old buddy had explained that he wasn't talking to the investigators because of "issues of attorney-client privilege. ... I didn't push it any farther." It was the kind of thing only another lawyer could understand. □

Tonight at 8PM at Palm Beach Plaza Mall:

Aruba's Majestic Carnival Season Comes To Life!



PALM BEACH - Palm Beach Plaza Mall new majestic carnival season has started at Aruba's largest mall. The Aruba Carnival is a thrilling show of over-the-top pag-

eantry, produced by thousands and delighting and uniting the entire country. Here's the scoop on how it began. Carnival was born in 1954,

as a series of small street festivals. The Tivoli Club, Aruba's oldest private social club, was the first to have a pre-Lenten celebration in Oranjestad in



February 1944. The Allied victory of World War II was commemorated by an Aruba Festival - a large parade in San Nicolas comprised largely of Caribbean-English immigrants who came to Aruba to work at the Lago Oil Refinery. The first steel and brass bands debuted a few years later and small parades sprouted here and there. Tonight at 8PM, Palm Beach Plaza Mall will have a great Carnival Show where you can experience for yourself the taste of Aruba's Carnival culture with the opportunity to take



pictures with the majestic carnival dancers with carnival costumes. Come and enjoy the show! □

